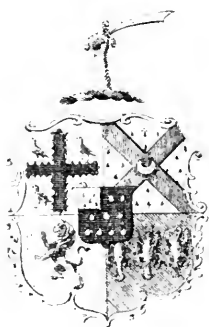


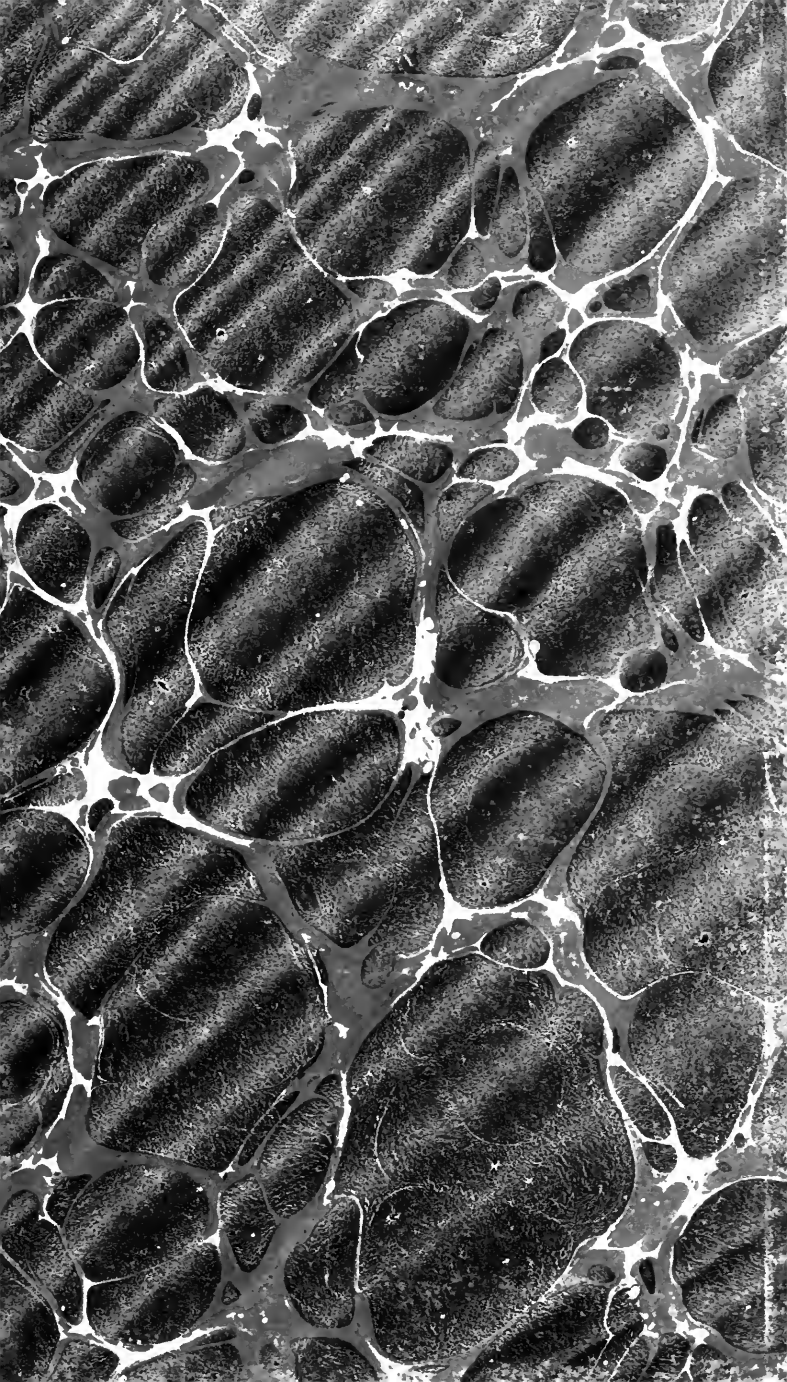
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*R. Richards*

*Car. Ynack.*



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THE  
H— FAMILY:  
TRÄLINNAN; AXEL AND ANNA;  
AND OTHER TALES.

BY  
FREDRIKA BREMER.

TRANSLATED  
BY MARY HOWITT.

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IN TWO VOLUMES.—VOL. II.

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LONDON:  
LONGMAN, BROWN, GREEN, AND LONGMANS,  
PATERNOSTER-ROW.

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1844.

LONDON  
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## PREFACE TO TRÄLINNAN

(THE BONDMAID).

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A beloved friend, to whom I would communicate my warm interest in the Northern Legends of the Gods, read aloud with me during solitary autumn evenings in the country, a learned disquisition upon them. Her countenance continued stedfastly cloudy and dissatisfied during the whole, and when she came to the words—"Loke, found the half-roasted heart of a woman;" she flung the book vehemently from her and exclaimed,—“Nay! I can bear this no longer! It is too monstrous! too disgusting! It makes me actually ill!”

“And yet,” I zealously interposed—“I assure you there is much and deep meaning in this mythology, and the greatest interest, if we”——

“That may be,” interrupted me my friend somewhat impatiently, “but to comprehend it, I promise you I must take another method. Do you write something about this meaning that you consider so deep, and then I shall see whether I shall comprehend or endure it.”

The challenge was accepted with laughter; the execution of it drew forth tears,—for the misery and the darkness of the past arose, and was felt as present. Three days after our little conversation, the *BOND-MAIDEN* was written; and I proposed to read it aloud to my friend, while by way of prologue I said, “I have here endeavoured to collect into one tangible picture what our forefathers believed respecting gods and men, about life and death, heaven and hell, as well as earthly things. In the dawn of the world, as in that of the day, we see first the shadows of night still rest on the earth, yet at the same time we behold the morning red of the eternal truth, and herald of the sun, in whose light our race has acquired light, and the slave his freedom.” My friend listened to my prologue in silence, and I commenced my reading.

It is always a hard matter to go through with, as my friend, whenever I begin to read to her any of my compositions, is sure to begin mercilessly to gape. I say “to go through with,” because I have found that if the article rivet her attention, which, heaven

knows is not always the case, the gapings quickly disappear, and give place to most lively and enchanting sympathy. As now, therefore, with a secret glance at my friend, I began to read aloud "the Bondmaiden," and with a dreadful feeling saw her let one undisguised yawn follow another; I pretended not in the least to perceive it, but read on, and soon beheld to my great consolation, the mouth close itself, and the eyes and ears become profoundly attentive. The result of the reading was, nevertheless, but little edifying.

"Ah, my poor soul!" said my friend with a deep sigh, "that truly was no amusing history! For your Krumba, or Tumba, or Katakumba, is too hideous; and then the conclusion — ah! it is horribly tiresome altogether!"

I defended my Bondmaiden the best that I could, at the same time observing that her name was Kumba, and not either Tumba or Katakumba. My friend's last words were, "It may be very true that she is beautiful. I would willingly wish to believe so; but I beg to be excused liking her. There is interest enough about her; but the conclusion, the conclusion . . . . .!"

The Bondmaid continued a good while after this in silence, undergoing, the while, first one and then



another change, but still without being able to win my friend's favour. I have now resolved to make the public, from whose decision, as from that of God himself, there is no appeal, the judge between us; and to hear what it says of the Bondmaiden. My friend assures me, that no one can desire more cordially than she, that "Katakumba"—she has perversely taken a determined whim to call my Bondmaiden thus—may be admired; and I protest to my friend, that no one can more heartily chime in with her desire than

THE AUTHORESS.

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TRÄLINNAN:  
A SKETCH FROM THE OLDEN TIME.

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## PERSONS.

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FRID, King's Daughter, betrothed to King Dag.

KUMBA, } Bondmaids.  
FEIMA, }

GRIMGERDA, a Sorceress.

A Spirit of Light.

A Spirit of Darkness.

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The Scene is a woody mountain region. Amongst the rocks rises the Castle of a Viking. On one side is the Sea; on the other a Flower-Garden.

# TRÄLINNAN.

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## ACT I.

### SCENE I.

*The Flower Garden.* FEIMA binds up flowers to their supports. KUMBA waters them.

### FRID.

THE morning is delicious and clear. Yet glitters in the grass the honey-dew from the tree Mima. The Nornor sprinkle its crown with water from the sacred fountain, and let it softly rain down in heavenly sweetness over the flowers and leaves of the field. The bee sucks it from the bosom of the flowers, and then bestows the precious juice on man, which is delicious both to the sick and the sound. How beautiful, how rich, is Nature, how full of wisdom are all her arrangements! How great is the goodness of God, who shaped the earth for mankind like a cup filled with honey!

Brightly advances the sun on his hero path. Receive my greeting, thou radiant creation of the All-Father, thou at whose fire spirits of light and spirits of darkness assemble themselves affectionately to prepare the golden harvest of the earth! Here all burns, here all rejoices in the splendour of the All-Father's eye! The All-Father is light, is fire. Love, too, is fire, is an animated flame sprung from the All-Father's bosom. O Sun! thou, the image of his person; thou, warm and glorious as love; I bow myself in adoration before thee, and pray thee to protect a flame as pure and powerful as thine. A beam of thy fire kindle thou in the eyes of King Dag; it burns yet more beautifully in his heart; he is the descendant of a divine race;—protect him, illumine his voyage over the great sea! Make his path light, his arm strong and victorious! Conduct him home to the court of his fathers, to his faithful bride; and, kneeling by his side, I will consecrate to thee a better offering than now, thou glorious king of day!

*[She approaches Kumba and Feima.]*

Bond-maidens, it is good! The flower-garden is well tended. The beauty of the plants gladdens both eye and heart. Soon, too, will King Dag see it, and reward your care. He has commissioned me to give you a testimony of his favour. He will one day give you more beautiful ones himself. Feima, take this silver chain. Thou shalt wear it on thy wedding-day. The same sun which blesses my union with

King Dag shall witness thy marriage with thy faithful Hreimer. He shall be my master-gardener. The cottage, which I have caused to be built for you, will soon be completed. I wish you always to remain with me and the king. Thou shalt brew the mead for our wedding; and thou wilt do well, Feima, to call the good Disor to thy aid, that it may be clear and strong.

FEIMA.

*(Falls down and will kiss Frid's feet. Frid extends to her her hand.)*

Princess! thy favour is great! We will live and die for thee! How beautiful is thy hand; how white, how silken. Only King Dag has hands as beautiful as thine!

FRID.

More beautiful, Feima, because they are stronger. Kumba, thou art the most intimate of my attendants. From the years of childhood have we been together. Thou shalt always be near me. Take this golden ring.

KUMBA.

King's daughter, that is not for me.

FRID.

I give it thee.

## KUMBA.

My hand is brown; my fingers are short and bony—what shall the golden ring do there? It does not become me. Retain thy gift. Thy favour is all that I desire.

## FRID.

O very well! I will keep my ring, but—till thy wedding-day. I know that Klur loves thee. Thou wilt not always be hard with him. He shall put the ring on thy finger. (*Kumba turns away.*) If thou hast a wish, thou shalt tell it me, that I may gratify it. I desire that all should be happy. Ah! see, see here reddens a rosebud! Welcome, thou little harbinger of the highest happiness! (*kisses it.*) Kumba! Feima! tend it well. Protect it from the night chill; moisten its root with the clearest water. “When the rosebuds redden, then shall I be near thee!” wrote last to me, King Dag. This rose is the first which reddens this year in the flower-garden. Perhaps when this flower opens, shall my life’s happiness be in bloom. Tend well the delicate bud, bond-maidens! Ye shall not do it in vain. Kumba, in about an hour I shall expect thee to attend me to the bath.

## KUMBA.

I will be punctual.

## FRID.

Once more—take care of my rosebud! [*She goes.*]



## SCENE II.

KUMBA. FEIMA.

FEIMA.

How good she is!

KUMBA.

She is happy!

FEIMA.

How beautiful she is, and proud! Well is she worthy to be beloved by a king like King Dag. Kumba! What art thou doing? Thou breakest off the bud which she bade us cherish!

KUMBA.

She can have so many others.

FEIMA.

O Kumba! that was ill done. Ought not her slightest wish to have been a law to thee? She, thy lady, thy benefactress!

KUMBA.

I am her slave!

FEIMA.

And yet is she so gracious, so condescending to thee! Fie! Kumba!

KUMBA.

Reproach me not. My mind is embittered. I will die!

FEIMA.

Die! Wherefore?

KUMBA.

I am a slave!

FEIMA.

And has one of our race ever been treated better than thou? Has not the king's daughter exempted thee from laborious occupations? Hast thou not from childhood been allowed to be near her, and treated better than all the servants? Does she not give thee better clothes, better food? Dost thou not go freely about in the royal halls? Hast thou not there been instructed in much that thralls are not wont to know?

KUMBA.

Feima! Why dost thou call me fortunate? Call me unfortunate! Why was I not left in the humble cottage, with poverty and hardship, and taught by

custom to endure the stern lot to which I was born? Why did the bondmaid receive a dwelling in the halls of kings, and learn to compare? Why did I learn to love beauty and greatness, when my lot was ugliness and insignificance? Why did I receive instructions which taught me only to despair?

FEIMA.

Ah! it was thy proud heart which taught thee to feel thus! It is thy haughty spirit which converts the sweetness into poison!

KUMBA.

Frid too is proud, and yet in her that is no fault!

FEIMA.

No! for pride becomes her; but pride does not become us. She is of the race of the Jarls; we of that of the Thralls.

KUMBA.

And yet Feima, the Saga says, that the father of our race was a god—yes, the same god who afterwards became the father of the haughty race of the gods. We are the elder brethren and sisters. Why are we suffered to creep in the dust, when the younger brethren are exalted to God's heaven?

FEIMA.

I do not know. But this I know, that it would not befit thee to wear Frid's crown on thy head, her golden girdle around thy waist, and to walk so slowly and proudly as she does. I feel that I could not help laughing at that.

KUMBA.

Woe is me! I know it too. In me that were ridiculous, which in her is beautiful. I am called, and I am, Kumba.\* But it is precisely of that that I complain. Why am I so?

FEIMA.

And I know too that there are much good and many joys for us if we can but bridle our minds and our desires. Have we not the sun's light and warmth? Have we not the fragrance of flowers as well as the king's daughter? Have we not the enjoyment of the cottage which protects us; of food which we eat? Can we not, under the guardianship of good masters, possess our husbands and children as well as the Jarls?

KUMBA.

Slaves!

• Clumsy.

FEIMA.

Hreimer is a slave; yes, and his hand is sooty, but diligent and faithful is that hand; his heart is good, and his glance tells me how dear he holds me. By his side I shall live happy and free from care, for we love one another, and we love our masters, and know that they will not separate us, or sell our children away from us. We desire nothing better than always to live in their service.

KUMBA.

Happy thou!

FEIMA.

The same happiness may be thine if thou wilt; Klur loves thee.

KUMBA.

Fie, fie, fie then! I speak not of him.

FEIMA.

And if thou wilt not have a husband; if thou wilt remain single, what more pleasant lot canst thou have than to serve the noble Frid, and live in the royal halls, and see around thee men and women of the race of the Jarls? That, indeed, is great and beautiful.

KUMBA.

Miserable! Know, Feima, farther towards the

north, towards the region where giants and horrible dragons have their abode, there is found amid ice-clad mountains, a people not far removed from beasts. Their clothes are the skins of wild beasts; their dwellings, caves and clefts of the rocks; their speech a bestial noise. Well, then, amongst this people, in their woods, I should feel myself happier than here, in the halls of the king's daughter!

FEIMA.

Thou wouldst prefer living amongst detestable monsters of the woods rather than with the good and beautiful Frid? Thou wouldst rather freeze in their caves, and hunt in their woods, than plait her golden hair and bathe in a silver ewer her white feet?

KUMBA.

Yes, that would I.

FEIMA.

Wonderful! And why?

KUMBA.

Because there I should be free! Because amongst them I should be somewhat.

FEIMA.

I do not understand thee. But if thou findest thyself so unhappy here, wherefore, Kumba, dost

thou not make thy prayer to Frid for thy freedom? She loves thee, and could certainly not refuse thy request. Wherefore dost thou linger where thou art in torment?

KUMBA.

Ask me not!

FEIMA.

Thou art very strange. Thou wilt and thou wilt not.

KUMBA.

Woe is me! It is so. My feet are riveted to the spot which bears me.

FEIMA.

Sister! poor sister! I compassionate thee!

KUMBA.

Well mayest thou. But the powers who made the races of the Jarls and the slaves, who gave to the one gold and to the other dust—of these will I demand, Was it just that ye dealt thus?

FEIMA.

Kumba, tempt not the gods!

KUMBA.

They who require of men worship because they



conferred on them a wretched life—who demand praise and offerings for the clod of earth which we cultivate with the sweat of our brow for others—to them will I say, “In your unjust, selfish existence—

FEIMA.

Silence! O silence! It is horrible to hear thee!  
Thy eyes flash, Kumba! Thou blasphemest!

KUMBA.

But if I do murmur and blaspheme in despair over my lot, what then? In a little time I shall grow dumb in the world—in a little time the blaspheming spirit will disappear like a vapour in space, and be as it had never been. But it has not disturbed the rejoicing songs of Valhalla; aloft there is not heard its pain and complaint. And when the achievements of the mighty shall live immortally in the songs of the Scalds on the earth—when their glory shall be admired by succeeding generations—who shall know anything of the life of slaves, of their virtues, their sufferings? Dumb, beneath the burden of their labours, they have sunk into the earth, and are forgotten. Where is found justice for them, in heaven or upon earth? We are born to no end.

FEIMA.

Nay, that I cannot believe. Say not our holy Sagas, that for us, too, shall be found room after

death, there, where every one shall receive his reward for what he has done on the earth, whether it be good or evil?

## KUMBA.

Seest thou the pale grey cloud in the distance, which sails over the wild heath? Seest thou, far off in the marshes, the vapours tossed about by the wind? There beholdest thou the life of a slave after death. Seest thou the sun, how he warms the world from the inward glow of his own happiness; the stars by night, beaming down tranquilly, as kings from their thrones, as happy spirits in the courts of the gods—there hast thou the immortality of the noble-born of the hero-race. Dark is our life on the earth, dark on the other side of the grave! It is not good to go poor to Odin—the poor find in his halls no room. Alone for a nobly-born hero, alone for a king who carried far and wide the blood-dripping sword, resounds the road to Valhalla; for him only are adorned its couches, for him its cup is burnished, and the Valkyrior bring wine. The joys of heaven are made only for the great, the happy on earth.

## FEIMA.

But it is said likewise, that the servant who comes in the train of a great lord can slip into the glorious Asgård; therefore, often do the servants kill themselves on their master's corpse.

## KUMBA.

Fools! Yes, to become slaves to them after death as they have been here. "Wretches" are the slaves termed by the Scalds; and justly, for wretched is their lot even there, beyond Hela's nocturnal halls. Thralldom and fatigue await them there as here. And for such of us, who do not accompany some mighty lord in death, there shall be no resurrection—we have here lived in pain.

## FEIMA.

Ah! my heart tells me different. It says that the gods will never take away again the existence which they have given.

## KUMBA.

Seest thou the worm in the sand which is tortured and dragged along by ants? See how it writhes, how it is agonized! Let it be! If thou rescuest it, a thousand others will still be tortured. In vain dost thou writhe, worm. Thy tormentors drag thee to the hillock, to the unhonoured funeral-pile, from which no glorifying flame ascends, and where thou shalt speedily become nothing. Is not the worm created by the gods as well as we? They regard not the worm; they look not down on us. Our fates are alike.

## FEIMA.

No, no! I would not believe that, if thou said it

a thousand times. They who have served in truth shall certainly hereafter dwell in peace and joy. But, were it indeed not so, were it otherwise——

KUMBA.

What then?

FEIMA.

From the dust was I taken. The goodness of God gave me life. I have seen the beauty of the sun; I have enjoyed the fruits of the earth, the freshness of the water, the cool shade of the trees—I have loved. If the gods shall one day reduce to nothing the dust which they have raised up, I will then praise them for the life which I have enjoyed; and will deliver again into their hands what from their hands I have received, if not without regret, at least without complaining.

KUMBA.

Shall I admire, or shall I despise thee?

FEIMA.

We are small; let us in humility acknowledge it. Humility is the soul's repose. O Kumba, Kumba! Leave thy proud heights—humble thyself. See, it is only by stooping that thou canst gather this beautiful flower. Quit the regal palace if thou art not happy there, but go not amongst the wild people. Come to us, sister; come and remain with us. Hreimer and I

will love thee, cherish thee, perform the heaviest tasks for thee. Choose a husband, possess a cottage, and press a child to thy bosom. My mother has told me, that when she gave me birth the world became light to her, and that she would not have exchanged me for a kingdom. The animals, which are so much beneath us, how they love, how they rejoice themselves in their young! Become a wife and mother, Kumba! become good and happy.

KUMBA.

The cradle and the bier are the tools of the Nornor, and no one can escape his fate. I will not give birth to a being doomed to unhappiness.

FEIMA.

Hreimer and I are happy, and yet we are the children of slaves.

KUMBA.

My mother was amongst the slaves of Queen Gunnild—she was the most faithful of her servants. Poor and heavy was her lot, yet did she wish to live. My father was a free-born person, who thought little of forsaking the woman who loved him, and the child she had born to him. I remember a night—that night has stretched itself over my whole life. Flames arose from a pile—they ascended high into heaven. It was the corpse of the queen which was burned.

My mother was amongst those who tended the pile; she, with many others, were cast alive into the flames! The queen, it was said, needed her attendants in the other world. I stood amongst the people, still a child, and heard my mother's cry, and saw her burn. Fatherless and motherless, I went thence into the world alone, and wandered in the woods without knowing whither. There came people, who seized me, and carried me back to the court of King Atle. They said that I wished to run away, and I was conducted to the presence of the king. I answered haughtily to his questions, and he caused me to be whipped till the blood came, in punishment, as he said, of my disobedience. Thou, Feima, then lay on thy mother's bosom—thou didst not understand what I felt.

## FEIMA.

But Frid, King Atle's beautiful niece, understood it. She begged thee from the king, and cherished thee like a mother, although she was scarcely older than thyself. She endeavoured to recompense thee for all that thou hadst suffered.

## KUMBA.

Then did I sit in the nights, and gazed on the wandering stars, on the flying clouds. I asked them of my mother's fate; I called her name, and listened. The night wind flew complaining over the heath, and

the fog bedewed me with tears. See, there, the only answer that I received.

FEIMA.

O canst thou not forget the horrors of thy childish years in all the kindness which has been showered on thy youth? And what dost thou know? Perhaps thy mother's soul lies happily in the sunshine which now closes thee in its warm embrace. O that it would become light in thy soul, and that thou couldst see life and thy own destiny in a clearer vision! It is long since thou hast offered to the gods. Come, sister, come! Let us go to the holy fountain of offering on the mountain. Dost thou see this silver-penny? I received it once from King Dag. I will now offer this for thee. Carry thou also thither an offering of something dear to thee, that we may win the favour of the Powers, and that they may hear our prayers.

KUMBA.

And what wouldst thou that I should solicit?

FEIMA.

A pious, a contented mind.

KUMBA.

Am I then so wicked, Feima?

FEIMA.

Sister, pardon me the hard word;—thou art not good.



KUMBA.

Thou speakest the truth. But, Feima, I have wished to be good. O! had the gods heard my sighs, Feima, I should now have been pious; like Frid, I would wish to make all happy. Seize, torment a bee, and it will sting, and leave poison in the sting; but leave it in its freedom, let it possess its wings and its flowers, and it will suck and confer only delicious sweetness.

FEIMA.

And what wouldst thou desire of the gods?

KUMBA.

Beauty, high birth, wealth, and—a king's love; room in the halls of Odin after death, for me and all my race.

FEIMA.

Kumba, thou art mad. Thy glance is wild. Poor sister! Thy mind is diseased. Come, O come with me to cool thy brow with the holy water, and offer and pray with me in the still morning, while the tumult of the world is hushed, and when Heimdal's ever-listening ears can be reached even by the lowest prayers. Come!

KUMBA.

I will not, sister. At the prayers which now arise

within me, thou wouldst be horrified, and the gods would reject me. Thou art right. My soul is sick. Therefore go, leave me alone. Go!

FEIMA.

And what shall I say to the king's daughter, when she inquires after her rosebud?

KUMBA.

Tell her that a bitter north wind took it off.

FEIMA.

Then thou wilt not accompany me?

KUMBA.

No, I say; no! Leave me alone.

FEIMA (*aside, as she goes away*).

I will then go alone, and pray for her. Yet—Hreimer, will gladly accompany me to offer with me for the unhappy sister. [She goes.

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SCENE III.

KUMBA (*alone*).

Yes, go! Offer, pray to the mercenary, the unjust gods. I am not childish enough to do that. But she

is good and pious. Were I but pious as she! Can I not be so? No! for I know more than she; my eyes have pierced deeper into the dark disposal of events; and a poison corrodes me, which she does not know. "Why dost thou not fly?" she demanded. "Wherefore dost thou not solicit thy freedom?" Unhappy power, which binds my will and my soul! Abhorred, beloved torment, which causes me to court what I never can win, and to seek what I ought to fly from, thou wilt tyrannize over me in life and in death. Ah! why saw I the glorious object that I am not to possess? Why should I behold a day which will never shine for me? Why, stern and terrible fate, didst thou allure me up into the light, only to plunge me deeper into my darkness? The mischief is now done; my eyes are dazzled, my glance is fascinated, my heart is doomed, my life is given over to misery. *Here* is my torment, and here must I remain; so will the inexorable Powers. I must, because I must hear his name pronounced. Not to hear him mentioned, is not to get air to breathe. I must see him again, once more hear his voice, and live in the lustre of his eyes. O King Dag! wilt thou notice the bondmaiden? Wilt thou give one look, one thought, to her who would gladly die for thee? Thou wilt clap thy proud steed with thy strong victorious hand; but it would be defiled by the touch of the hand of Kumba. For Frid—for the king's daughter—is thy hand; for her, thy em-

braces, thy kisses, thy great, proud hero-heart. And her do I tend and adorn every day, that she may become more beautiful for thee, and all the happier in thy love. Every day shall I see her beauty and happiness, and feel myself devoured by envy. O depth of anguish! O bottomless pit! In thee am I doomed to live and move for ever! [*She pauses.*]

In the cold, foggy Nifelhem is the fountain Hvergelmer. Streams of poison rush from it; and in its depth, amid countless snakes, lies the great snake Nidhögg, which gnaws at the root of the tree of the world—gnaws, gnaws till it decays. When I was very young, the Saga easily made me shudder. I am now quite at home in it. I seem sometimes indeed to be myself the fountain, that mist is my world, and that the worm gnaws at the tree of my life. [*Again silent.*]

Sometimes dark thoughts rise up within me. It is said that elves of darkness, which live on the northern edge of the earth, beneath the deepest roots of the Tree of the World, sometimes ascend thence, and speak words with the children of men, which fright the light of day. Hell sends them forth to execute its commissions and affairs. It seems to me as if at times the voice of evil spirits spoke within me, and exhorted me to ....

[*Another silence.*]

If I could but die, and find rest! Could my life, after death, but become pleasant; might once the

freed spirit but look down from heaven upon the earth, where it had suffered and been tormented . . . . Did I but know that a merciful God had prepared for his tired and weary child a peaceful and bright abode, where it might repose after its hard conflict, O then could I still submit myself! could then renounce, then . . . . [Weeps.

But, O ye gods! ye have forgotten us, and therefore is my spirit exasperated. To your favourites you have given all, to us nothing. Nothing? Yes, bitterness! poison! But with the poison there is strength. Ye Gods! if from the drops, which from hour to hour you cause to drop into my bosom, there swells a stream which burns and destroys, the guilt *fall*—on you!

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## SCENE IV.

*Frid's Bedchamber.*

FRID. KUMBA.

FRID.

Kumba! Plait my hair, and anoint it with the oil of the south, which I received from King Dag.

KUMBA.

What thou commandest I will do.

FRID.

And while thou plaitest it, relate to me some of the Sagas which thou knowest so well. It is justly said that the dwelling of the Sagas is surrounded by the murmurs of cool billows, to whose rushing Odin gladly listens. Enlivening and soothing at the same time are Sagas and song,—a worthy pastime for the race of the gods.

KUMBA.

Wilt thou, king's daughter, hear the ancient Sagas of Rig? \*

FRID.

Gladly.

KUMBA.

Heimdal—so it is said; the trusty and wise god, went once on a time to walk in the country, and came on the sea-shore to a house which he entered. The door stood wide open; a fire burnt on the hearth, and within sate the inhabitants, grown grey with labour, Ae and Edda, in old-world garments. Edda took out of the ashes the heavy, thick, seed-mingled cake, brought forth the soup in a bowl; but the greatest delicacy was the sodden calf. Heimdal, who called

\* Introduced into the older Edda. See Geijer's, "Svea Rikes Häfder."

himself king, continued three nights there, and nine months after his departure, Edda gave birth to a son, which was baptized and named Träl (Slave). He grew and flourished, was of a dark complexion, had wrinkled skin on his hands, contracted knuckles, thick fingers, an ugly countenance, a humpback, and long heels. A beggar-girl came to the house; her feet sore, her arms sunburnt, her nose hooked. She was called Trälinna (bondwoman, or female slave). She lived there with Träl, the heavy days, and bore him sons and daughters. Their employment was to twine boat ropes, to drag loads, to carry firewood, to keep and fatten cattle, herd swine, watch the goats, dig turf. From her came the race of slaves.

Rig went farther, and found in another house another pair. The door stood a-jar; fire burned on the hearth. The husband was shaping a tree into a weaver's beam; his beard was trimmed, his hair cut on the forehead; he had a close shirt, which was fastened by a clasp at the neck. The wife twirled the spinning-wheel, spun thread, and converted it into clothing. She had a fillet on her head, a brooch on her bosom, a cloth round her neck, and ribbon on the shoulders. The couple were called Afe and Amma. Rig was hospitably entertained, and stayed with them three nights. Nine months afterwards, Amma gave birth to a son, rosy and blooming, with sparkling eyes. He was baptized and called Karl. He grew and throve, learned to tame oxen, to culti-

vate land, to build houses, forged horsenails, made carts, drove the plough. To him was conducted home as a bride, Snör, hung round with keys, in kirtle of goat's hair. They exchanged rings, spread the sheet, built a house. They had sons and daughters, and of them are come the race of *Karls*, or free men.

Rig went further. He came to a hall. The door was closed, and adorned with a ring. He entered. The floor was strown. There sate, the couple, looking each other in the eyes—*Fader* and *Moder*. Their work was play. The husband shaped bows, twisted strings, polished arrows. The wife ironed and starched her sleeves, and made up a head-dress. She had a jewel on her breast, a silken kirtle, blue figured linen, a countenance more beautiful, a bosom more charming, a neck more white than the recent snow. Moder spread the figured white cloth on the table, set on it the thin white wheaten cakes, and dishes of embossed silver, full of all kinds of meat, pork, and roasted birds. There was wine in flagons and embossed cups; they drank and talked till the day dawned. Rig remained three nights there also, and after nine months, Moder brought forth a son, who was wrapt in silk, was baptized, and called Jarl. His hair was flaxen, his cheeks bright, his eyes keen as those of a young eagle. He grew up, twisted bow-strings, shaped bows, flung the spear, shot arrows, shook lances, rode horses, hunted with hounds, drew the sword, and exercised himself in swimming. Then



came Rig again to the court, taught him Runes, gave him *his* name, and acknowledged him as *his son*. The young Rig therefore marched over the rocks in war, won victories and lands, distributed goods and estates, and married the daughter of Herve, the slender, fair, noble Ema. Of their sons, the youngest was Kour. He contended with his father Rig in the knowledge of Runes, and won. Then was it the son's lot to be himself called Rig, and thenceforth to understand Runes beyond all others. From him are descended the Jarls and kings.

Here ends the Saga about Rig.

FRID.

Thanks, Kumba! The Saga is beautiful and full of meaning.

KUMBA (*aside*).

Beautiful?! Yes, for her.

FRID.

But my attention was distracted while I listened to it. A great, a precious, and almost affecting recollection came vividly on my soul. To-day, three years ago, I saw, for the first time, King Dag.

KUMBA.

Ah! speak of that! (*aside*). The poison is sweet!

## FRID.

Thou knowest that my father's brother, the gloomy Atle, had in an engagement killed King Dag's father, the victorious King Ifvar. King Dag, and his brother Ragnar, revenged their father's death, and stormed my uncle's castle. Shut up in the inner room of the castle with my tender brother Arild, I heard the din of arms, and the battle-cries of the warriors. Arild clenched his little hands in wrath. I prayed to the gods for his life, for I held him as dear as a mother. Suddenly I heard a cry, accompanied by a wild jubilation of victory. "Atle is fallen! The brave Ragnar has slain him!" But immediately thereon—"Ragnar is wounded! Ragnar is dead! Revenge! revenge!" Amid a horrid din, steps drew near the room. Before the strokes of war-axes, the door went to pieces. At this moment I felt not fear, but wrath and a proud desperation. I had seized spear and shield, and stood there resolved to die, rather than to surrender myself a prisoner; and till my last breath to defend the little one. "Back!" thundered a lordly voice to the on-pressing martial throng; and environed by the flashings of bloody swords, as by a thousand jagged lightnings, I beheld before me a man—a god he seemed to me to be.

KUMBA.

It was *he*!

## FRID.

Yes, it was *he!* It was King Dag! “Yield thyself!” exclaimed he to me. In answer I sought his breast with my spear. My trembling hand was arrested by his sword, and he disarmed me. Bleeding, I sunk by my brother’s side, exclaiming, “Mercy for him! Mercy for the child!” “Death to the traitor’s son!” cried wildly the warriors, and rushed on. King Dag turned himself to his people, and covered us with his shield. “Back!” exclaimed he once more commandingly to the wild troop. “With women and children we contend not. The victory is won. Down with your weapons!” But a frantic lust of murder had taken possession of Ragnar’s people, and they cried—“Blood for blood!” Then shouldst thou have seen King Dag! Glorious and strong as the god Thor, he lifted his broadsword in defence of the helpless. Like lightning flew its strokes whistling through the air, and fell on the blood-thirsty warriors. Heaps of dead were round his feet.

## KUMBA.

The brave! the glorious!

## FRID.

Seized with amaze at his superhuman strength, Ragnar’s people began to give way. Then cried

King Dag—"Hither, my men! Every true friend follow me!" He lifted up Arild, and placed him in the arms of one of his warriors; he took myself in his own, and guarding me with shield and sword, he broke through the tumult of war. I saw nothing more. A swoon overpowered my senses; my eyes were closed.

KUMBA.

But he watched over thee?

FRID.

When I opened them again, it was night; but a night lighted up by a red and wild splendour. I saw from the distant strand a castle stand all in flames; but cool winds fanned my cheek, and farther and farther over the dancing waves, conveyed me the winged sea-dragon, and my little brother stood beside me under the purple pavilion, and clapped his hands in childish joy over the novel spectacle. Before me, on his knee, his godlike beautiful countenance illumined by the flames of the burning, and with uncovered head, lay King Dag, and I was his captive!

KUMBA (*aside*).

Happy lot!

FRID.

Ah, yes! His captive. For my heart had he

conquered,—the brave, the noble one; and I could not then, as I wished, in proud anger turn from the victor my glance. By his strength he had disarmed my hand, by his love he now sought to win my love; and when he prayed me as beautifully, as mildly as Balder, when he begged me, as a favour, to accept his kingdom and his crown, then I let him see what my heart felt, and he pressed me to his heart, and called me his bride.

KUMBA.

Thou happy one!

FRID.

Yes, I was happy. Days and nights went on, and life was to me like a beam of the light of God's heaven—all around me was so beautiful. The sea-dragon flew over the blue sea, under the dark-blue heaven, and the waves danced merrily around the prow, covered with golden shields, and the wind sung in the purple silken sails, splendidly embroidered with rich silver vine-branches. By day, King Dag exercised his men in martial manœuvres, and fired them to an almost frenzied, yet joyous, daring, while I watched them from the royal pavilion. When the evening came, and sea and winds were lulled, then took King Dag his harp, and played and sung by my side, which made my heart beat with transport. Then burned the stars clearer,

and the spirits of the sea arose in enchantment to the surface of the water; then seemed the sea to burn with a strange light, and we floated onward as on waves of fire. All things did homage to the glorious one, and he did homage to me; yes, happy was I, happy, amid the dangers of war! My father's castle was plundered and burnt. Enemies' hosts invaded King Dag's realm. We possessed no home. Then the son of Valhalla conducted me to the temple of Upsala, and gave me there an asylum, while he advanced against his enemies. He returned and brought me to this strong castle; but was himself again soon obliged to leave me, in consequence of a vow which forbade him to celebrate a joyous feast before he had freed his unfortunate sister Gudrun out of her ignominious captivity. Here should I remain, guarded by his trusty men, till he should return from the Saxon coast.

#### KUMBA.

And if he do not return? If he perish in strife on the distant strand? —

#### FRID.

No, no! I fear nothing. A far-prescient Vala, a renowned prophetess, who visited the temple of Upsala, has told me his fate. His course will be long and victorious. From this campaign he will return happily, and rich in honours and treasures.

## KUMBA.

Thou hast seen the temple of Upsala, the magnificent court of the gods! Thou hast lived amongst Diar and Divor. Were they beautiful and happy?

## FRID.

Yes, yes, beautiful and blessed. A noble tranquillity, an infinite dignity repose on their features, and breathe through their whole being. The cares and the joys of earth touch them not; they stand high above them, gazing into the clearness of the heaven of the gods. The countenance of the chief priest is majestic as we conceive of that of Odin, full of power and mildness. All disquiet dies in him who contemplates it: the before stormy heart hushes itself involuntarily at his glance, and is at peace.

KUMBA (*aside*).

Peace, ah! And I? (*aloud.*) And the temple and its happy abodes are really splendid?

## FRID.

Beyond all description. Of gold and precious stones are the walls; a radiance glows thence, which illuminates the country far around. The gorgeous splendour of the interior of the temple testifies to the power of the divinity; while the silence in the sacred groves, in the lofty halls, interrupted only by

the solemn songs of the Diars, speaks of its sublimity, and draws the spirit to contemplation. Had I not so deeply loved King Dag, I should have dedicated myself to the service of the gods, and continued there amongst the sacred Assyniors.

KUMBA (*aside*).

She chooses between the throne and the temple.  
But I? —

FRID.

When I recal those days, a wonderfully delightful and solemn feeling seizes me. Ah! it was beautiful in the courts of the temple, in its lofty halls! Pondering on the counsel of the gods; silently walked the deep-thinking Diars —

KUMBA.

And didst thou learn their secret wisdom—the verses which teach how to quiet waves, quench fire, and dissipate care? Didst thou get to know about the beginning and the end of all things?

FRID.

No! I was too young, and too much engrossed by the outward splendour of life, and by my love. My voice, indeed, blended with the songs of the Assyniors, and I took part in their nocturnal dances, in their ceremonies; but their meaning I understood



not. They regarded me — and justly — as not worthy to comprehend them.

KUMBA.

And what, indeed, is all the wisdom of the priests, in comparison with the love of such a king as King Dag?

FRID.

Thou sayst truly, Kumba. But had I never seen him, then could I have preferred, beyond any earthly throne, to live as a priestess in the holy temple. Asgård, as it is also called, is an image of the celestial Asgård, the eternally green Gudhem; and beautiful is it, amid offerings and songs of praise, to walk before the gods on earth, and up to their everlasting abodes above us.

KUMBA.

That I can believe. Are there always offerings in the temple?

FRID.

Yes, often; but there are in particular three great annual festivals, which were instituted by Odin. Recently has been celebrated the Sacrifice of Victory, that takes place in spring, when the open waters invite to Viking-voyages.

KUMBA.

And do they indeed sacrifice men?

FRID.

Yes. Most commonly slaves and malefactors.

KUMBA.

Slaves and malefactors?

FRID.

Yes; but sometimes also the noblest life. The victim is led forth festively adorned; the seats of the gods are tinged with blood; it is also sprinkled on the assembled people. The smoke which ascends from the flame of sacrifice is delicious, and fills the halls with a delicious aroma. Sweetly sound in accordance the songs of the priests.

KUMBA.

But the victims, the victims! do they complain not? do not their shrieks of misery ascend above the songs of the priests?

FRID.

Their wailings are prevented; or are drowned in the songs of praise.

KUMBA.

They are drowned by the songs of praise?

FRID.

Yes, and no dissonance disturbs the majesty and beauty of the lofty solemnity.—But what is this, Kumba? I hear the tramp of steeds, the pealing of horns; the drawbridge is raised! There must be tidings—important ones! Good Kumba, go, fly, and bring me word what it is.

[*Kumba goes.*

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SCENE V.

FRID (*alone*).

It is certainly a messenger from King Dag! My heart assures me of it;—how it beats! Still, thou unquiet one, still! O the pleasures and the pangs of love! And yet, beloved pangs, I would not exchange you for the Assynior's eternal repose! O my king! to love thee, that is my life; but if my heart beats thus at the anticipation of a message from thee, how shall I be able to see thy face and not die of joy?

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## SCENE VI.

FRID. KUMBA.

KUMBA.

A letter——from——King Dag! With it there are costly presents——

FRID.

A letter! Give it me, give it me! O ye dear Runes! (*kisses the Runic tablet and reads*). He comes, comes soon! Before the next new moon he is here! Victorious, rich in honour and spoil, comes he to his bride, “the eternally beloved.” O my bridegroom! O my Dag!

KUMBA (*aside*).

And I?

FRID.

I will myself make the arrangements for the messenger's reception. I will myself speak with him. I must see the man who has lately seen my beloved; I must hear him talk of King Dag. Kumba, go thou and work on the golden girdle, and be diligent, Kumba, that it may be quickly ready. I will wear it on the King's arrival. I desire that he should find his bride beautiful. I shall then really see him soon! Happy I! [Goes.

## SCENE VII.

KUMBA (*alone*).

But I! Why was I born? Shall I now see them, their embraces, hear their sighs of love and vows of truth? Shall I adorn her for him; help to make her still more beautiful in his eyes? So has she commanded. O ye great! ye dream not that a slave also has a human heart. You trample it under your feet, and give it not a thought, and take not the slightest heed of its death-pangs. "They drown their complaints," said she, "that the joy of the high solemnity may not be disturbed." They dragged them forth to the stone of sacrifice; they murdered them, and drowned their complaints. Out of the fire which devoured their quivering limbs, there arose a sweet odour for the chief priest who sung the praises of the gods. But the men! the slaves! the poor! no help, no escape. They must submit. They were dragged forth spite of prayers and resistance. They must submit. Horrible doom of the Norna! Hard necessity! And for me to—but why necessity for me? If I will, who can constrain me? Can I not, if I will it, command both my own fate and that of others? Necessity exists only for the weak. The strong makes his own laws, and compels even the gods. My stature indeed is low, but my will is strong. Let the sacrificers tremble.

If I should kill Frid, and clothe myself in her garments, and deceive King Dag in the obscurity of night? Loke was cunning, and Loke was successful. I feel that his fire burns in my veins. (*She puts on Frid's mantle, and puts her crown on her head.*) In truth a glorious costume. Well may the heart beat proudly beneath this splendour. Now am I the king's daughter. (*She gazes at herself in a burnished steel shield.*) Woe is me! I am it not. My figure is short and thick, my eyes small, my hand rough. Woe! I am the bondwoman's daughter, and my lot is fixed, woe! (*Flings down the robe and crown, and stamps violently.*) No, I will not; I will not long endure this torture. The snake rages in my vitals, and I long after something which may still its hunger. It must be done—by some means! Shall I go to the temple, and gaze into the divinely-tranquil countenance of the chief priest, which allays all disquiet? No; I see the sacrificial knife in his hand!—the victim bleeds,—the sacrificers cry—it is the tranquillity of the gods!

#### CHORUS OF SPIRITS OF LIGHT UP IN THE AIR.

Look to heaven,  
To the sun look,  
They deceive men never;  
Shrieks of victims  
Shall have ending,  
God's sure goodness never!  
  
Offer hatred,  
Offer vengeance,

Meed of vengeful will,—  
'Tis but torture ;  
But the true heart's  
Lot is lovely still.

Wonder not then  
At the lofty  
Peace of powers sublime.  
See how brighten  
Earth's own fortunes  
In the far-off time!

From the depths, and  
From the heights, will  
There be heard a voice,  
That to captive  
And to mourner  
Shall proclaim—"rejoice!"

Dumb shall grow each  
Elfin chorus ;  
But in heaven's acclaim  
Loftier spirits  
Shall adore the  
World-Redeemer's name.

## KUMBA.

*(Wakes out of deep thought, and says slowly.)*

But, perhaps, after the conflict——after the sacrifice, after the last bitterness, the last eclipse——it will become light——it will be calm, for the victim ! If one surrenders oneself freely, bleeds quietly, prays, and dies !——I hear happy voices speak of peace and reconciliation,——but, perhaps, they are only seductive illusions. I have had such before !——

CHORUS OF SPIRITS OF DARKNESS UNDER THE  
EARTH.

Sweet is revenge, for  
It strengthens and quiets  
Feelings of storm in  
The suffering heart.  
Drink of its fountain,  
Heart, thirst-consumed,  
Deep be thy draught,  
And thy thirst is no more.

Slavish souls waver—  
They will and they will not;  
Dare, then shrink trembling,  
And perish in pain!  
Spirits heroic  
Dare, and accomplish,  
Quenching their pangs  
In the conqueror's blood.

KUMBA (*as before*).

Yes. Yes, they were illusions—and I was merely weak. I hear well-known voices ascend out of the depth, and reproach me with it. Despicable is the eternally-complaining, eternally-hesitating soul. Despicable I will not be. I know what I will do. Yonder, far amongst the rocks, on the desolate shore, which the traveller dreads and the mariner shuns, dwelleth a sorceress, noted for her various knowledge, and exercising the mighty magic art—*Seid*. To her I will go—will bestow on her the most precious thing which I possess, on condition that she exerts her magic art for me, and gives my heart rest.



Ha! this thought invigorates my soul. It is said that snakes and wolves are her companions. Them I fear not. I have known them as they raged here within me. Away! away! To her! to her!

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## SCENE VIII.

FRID (*alone, standing in a window of the Castle*).

FRID.

What a storm! The night is wild, and in vain have I sought rest upon my bed. The sea-gull's cries sound shrill amid the roar of the waves. Ran's daughters, the dolorous, the poison-mixing, who, with pale hair, wander from rock to rock, seeking warm human hearts that they may press to their cold bosoms, how they now rave and foam, tumbling over each other—the terrible ones! Wildly dash pale lightnings from the careering clouds. O ye friendly powers, who desire the good of men, protect my beloved one on his voyage. Conduct him victoriously through the storms and the waves! He is a true descendant of the race of the gods, and so is his bride. Protect, bless us both! [*She is silent.*]

Is it the gloom of night which thus operates on my mind, or—is it an unhappy foreboding? But there is a strange feeling in my bosom, and gloomy thoughts

arise there, like the black elves out of the earth. Frid was not formerly weak and easily terrified; she has not trembled at the thunders of war; and when the winter-night came black and threatening, then I thought on King Dag and remained cheerful. Why then now? Now that he is no longer far off, now that he approaches every moment nearer to me, when I shall speedily look into his clear eyes—wherefore now this unquiet, this secret quaking in my heart?

[*Pauses.*

The sky is dark and wild. On the desolate coast gleam meteor lights. I know that they are base creatures, and seek to injure mankind. But ought, indeed, flames, gleaming spirits of witchcraft, to work evil to a descendant of Balder? Ought King Dag's bride to fear them? She will not.

[*Another silence.*

What strange power is it which moves itself in the air—so strong, so mighty to disturb? And this light, so mild, almost faint, like a feeble petitioner—whom does it guide through the dark night? Why is this light so different to that of the sun in splendour, and in its effect on the heart? How it battles with the dark clouds! Now it is quenched. Strange world, strange dark deep!——

I have been very happy. I have gone through life as in the radiance of a strong sunshine. If at any time the night threatened me, there came only a brighter day. But if the night should now come in earnest, and change my life into darkness!——

I have not reflected much on life. The very happy merely enjoy, and do not think. I have enjoyed life, and praised the goodness of the gods. But many are not so happy as I am. Many have little or no gladness. How do the world and the gods appear to them?—

Thoughts arise in me which I never had before. The lot of life seems to me strangely dealt on the earth. Why do some men receive so much and others so little? The goddesses of fate sprinkle the branches of the tree of the world with life-giving streams; but the drops fall unequally. O! but the fresh, the richly-sprinkled branches, will bend themselves over the dry ones, and impart to them of their moisture. This is certainly the will of the benevolent gods, and Frid's highest happiness shall be to follow it. And if some time my hour should come, my hour to suffer—what is that? Ye gods! what a hideous shape rides there on the pale moonbeams! He is little and black as a son of Hel. Is it one of the spirits which was born to Loke by the witch Angurboda; or is it a creation of my sick imagination? No, it draws nearer! It is no illusion!—Speak, hideous one! Who art thou? What is thy will?

BLACK-ELF.

From the under-earth I come on a message to thee.

FRID.

To what end? Wherefore?

BLACK-ELF.

Misfortune awaits thee. Death threatens thee.

FRID.

Death! Ah, no! I will not die, no!

BLACK-ELF.

Death is near thee.

FRID.

Nay, nay! Ah! What dost thou at my heart? It is become so heavy. Away, black one, away! Thou mayst not injure me! I am of the race of the gods.

BLACK-ELF.

Hel waits for thee in his dark dwelling.

*[He vanishes.]*

FRID.

I will not! No, I will not! Away! Ha! What a frost there is in my veins! Kumba! Kumba!

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SCENE IX.

KUMBA. FRID.

KUMBA.

Princess?

FRID.

Kumba! I am ill! Nay, turn not so pale, Kumba. It will go over. Is he gone, the hideous one? Seest thou nothing, Kumba?—there, in the moon-shine?

KUMBA.

I see nothing—except the shadow of thy own head on the wall. Look thyself.

FRID.

I have, indeed, had a bad dream. It was a miserable dream—a very miserable dream. It agitated me deeply. It was a weakness. Give me something to drink.

KUMBA.

Take this draught. It will strengthen you.

FRID.

Thanks—I need it. How thy hand trembles, good Kumba. The drink was good. Thanks, Kumba!

KUMBA (*after a moment's silence*).

Dost thou feel thyself better?

FRID.

Yes—I am better. I am calmer now. Go again to thy bed, Kumba. I, too, will go to rest, and endeavour to forget this dream. Good-night.

KUMBA.

*Good-night!**[She withdraws.]*

FRID.

I will try to sleep. I will no longer think on this hideous apparition. It was, perhaps, only a deception, a night shadow, which will vanish in the light of day. I will sleep,—I will sleep.

## ACT II.

## SCENE I.

*The Flower Garden. The evening.*

KUMBA. FEIMA.

KUMBA.

Thou weapest, Feima.—Wherefore?

FEIMA.

Canst thou ask? Is not the daughter of kings sick, sick to death? Do not her steps every day become fainter, her cheeks paler? See we not the traces of bitter tears on that countenance which before beamed only with smiles? Is not her very voice weak and faltering?

KUMBA.

And therefore dost thou weep?

FEIMA.

Yes; I weep, I will weep, that the lovely, the divinely-good Frid shall go away from the earth; that Hreimer and I shall lose our beloved mistress; that the young king will come home, and find his beautiful bride grown pale. How desolate will the rose-garden be, when we no longer see there the daughter of kings, no longer hear her silver voice; no longer see her beautiful countenance, she, the queen of all flowers! O it was a feast for me even to look upon her!

KUMBA.

Thou callest her the divinely-good. Why didst thou do that?

FEIMA.

Is she not so? Does she not desire to make every creature happy?

KUMBA.

Out of her rich treasure, she takes some gold dust and throws it around her. Who could not do that? What endures, what suffers she for the help of her fellow-creatures? Does she, indeed, touch with a finger the burden under which thou art bowed down? Does she stoop in order to alleviate thy fatigue?



FEIMA.

Kumba, thou art strange! Can, indeed, one of the race of the gods do thus?

KUMBA.

Why not, if it be good? Is not goodness, is not mercy divine?

FEIMA.

Yes; but the high gods, and their descendants, cannot perform the labours of slaves. It is not befitting them. Every one has his proper part.

KUMBA.

See then — it is therefore that I cannot do homage to thy gods, because they deem themselves too good to do good to us. *My* God, he before whom I would bow my knee, must do otherwise.

FEIMA.

And how?

KUMBA.

He should cause himself to be born in a lowly hut; he should participate in our burdens and our sufferings; he should choose his friends from amongst the despised and poor. He should, like the slaves, be scorned by the high, and partaking in their whole

fortune, should, although innocent, be put to death as a malefactor. But after death, he should come again in his glory to his own, and say to them,—“ I have suffered this with you and for you, that you might not despair, but believe that the Father of all looks down upon you; for on the other side of Hel’s dwellings, he has prepared a place for you, where you shall rest from your labours, where your tears shall be wiped away, and where you shall live in glory with me to the end of the world!” Oh, many other words should he say, at which the earth should tremble—power should be thrown down—chains should burst, and the fate of the slaves be changed . . . . the earth be bathed in blood! . . . . Ha! glorious, glorious!

FEIMA.

What spirit speaks through thee? Foam stands around thy pale lips. And thy words! How wild and strange they sound! Kumba! listen! Thou terrifiest me; but I understand thee not.

KUMBA.

That I believe.

FEIMA.

But this I understand, that she is good who gave me this chain, who built for Hreimer and me a cottage; who every day made my heart glad with

her friendly words. I know that I would rather bear burdens twice as heavy than see her oppressed by the least thing. When she commands, and I obey her, I know that it ought so to be, and that it is best for us both that it should be so.

KUMBA.

Thou art a slave, body and soul. Remain in thy dust!

FEIMA.

I will so, Kumba, and it shall not hinder me from being contented, and from believing in the goodness of the gods to great and small. To the gods will I now pray for the daughter of kings, that she may be restored to life, to her young consort and us. Blessed be he who heals her; blessed be he who averts from her Hel's cold hand! But cursed be he who desires her suffering! And if it be a human hand, may it be thus cursed! May Nifelhem's cold poison-stream drop for ever on the traitor's heart; may he never enjoy gladness on the earth!

KUMBA.

Sister, speak not thus!

FEIMA.

Yes, thus will I speak! I will work evil to the

evil one who desires the death of the good one! But I will not yet despair. I will sacrifice and pray for her. Seest thou this beautiful chain? I received it from her; for her will I offer it for the reconciliation of the unfriendly powers! [Goes.

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## SCENE II.

KUMBA (*alone*).

Blessings, curses, all are alike to me now, and stir my heart scarcely more than a faint evening breeze stirs the leaf of the aspen. Thus has it been within me since I ate of the she-wolf's heart, at the old woman's in Jernskog. It made my heart hard and cold. The swelling, its scathing torture, ceased. Hunger for revenge grew strong for action. I took courage to give to the proud daughter of kings the poison-draught which the sorceress had prepared. Since then there lies a trance upon my soul—it seems to me to sleep heavily, heavily;—will it not awake?

[*A pause.*

Frid is dying. Now is her joyous career closed. Now she partakes the mortal fate of others, and can learn what suffering is. Now will she not embrace, and be embraced by King Dag. All this beauty, this pride, this splendour will wither, moulder into dust!

No more will she pass like a reproach over my life, my feelings. I shall get rest!

*Rest!* Thou didst promise it me, mighty, dark Grimgerda; but yet lives a gloomy disquiet in the depth of my soul. I thirst after her tears. Methinks they would cool my tongue. A hunger devours me to see her sufferings, to hear her lamentations. That must proceed from the she-wolf's heart. Before, I was not so hard. And yet—if it could but be undone—if I could in the fountain of Urda purify myself from this guilt . . . . and yet go away and die innocent! . . . .

But it is too late. Therefore away, foolish thoughts! It is too late; I cannot return; and therefore forward, forward into the night, till all becomes dark; forward into hardness, till all becomes rigid and dead. Powers of Afgrund, strengthen my heart! I cannot win reconciliation with heaven. Well then, Afgrund! give to me then the benefit of my crime. Frid approaches. I will fix my attention on her feeble gait, on her pale countenance, her dimmed glance. Ha! now be proud, daughter of kings! Boast now of love and honour! I will hide myself behind the hedge of roses, and listen to her bewailings. Sweeter will they be to me than the song of the nightingale in the evening.

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## SCENE III.

FRID (*her appearance betrays a great debility,  
a wasting suffering*).

FRID.

This is the hour when all things weep the death of Balder. There is no tree, no leaf, no flower, which is not bathed in silent tears; the very stones are bedewed with sadness. Now is Nature weak; her soul is moved; now can she perhaps feel sympathy with the sufferings of a daughter of humanity; and will hear her prayer, and put an end to her torment.

[*She supports herself thoughtfully against a tree.*]

He died, the good—wounded by the hand of a subtle foe, and in the same instant Peace quenched her torch and Discord kindled her crackling flames. Pain and tears made their home on the earth. Before, it was not thus; before, it was very different. The gods played joyously on the green earth, and in love created the race of men. But Jettermör came and excited woe; and monsters arose, and strife . . . .

I did not notice this before, but now I see it, for the agony which consumes my body opens my eyes to the world's suffering. What is good, what is pure in life? Does not the serpent of Midgård coil his venomous circle round the earth? Does not Nidhögg gnaw at the root of the Tree of the World? Is there

not found a concealed worm in every human heart, in the bosom of every flower? It slumbers for a while, and the flower diffuses its fragrance, and the man smiles. But it wakes, comes forth, and stings, and the flower withers, and the man dies.

My hour, too, is come; my hour of suffering. Since the night when the Black elf came with its message of terror, a secret disease corrodes my heart, and my days and my nights are without repose. My eyes are weak, my lips parched, my knees tremble—my strength of life dies away! . . . .

O Dag! O my bridegroom! What wilt thou say when thou comest to thy castle, and findest thy bride changed into a pale ghost? Yes, perhaps before . . . . but no! that were too cruel! To *die* without having seen thee were eternal misery. No! so savage the Nornor are not! O no! Stands not the All-Father's heaven above me so clear and mild? Stand not the beings of nature all around me so tearful and tender? Why, then, should I despair? Why should I not yet hope to regain life and happiness? Perhaps this suffering was merely sent to make me better, and more grateful. I will bow myself before the gods of nature, and implore them for help, for great is my suffering, great my need of alleviation.

O ye friendly powers which murmur in the green trees! Strong and healing are the juices which the sun pours into your bosoms. Proud and strong do ye stand against storm and winter, but on the head

of the weary wanderer you stretch your protecting arms, and give a covert to the young of the bird. Hear, ye gentle existences, my lamentation and my prayer. Torture consumes my limbs, and will sink by degrees my body to the grave! Tell me, O tell me! have you strength which can give life to my strength; manna, which can invigorate mine?

### THE SPIRITS OF THE TREE.

We have it not!

FRID.

Ye spirits which sport in the bosom of the flowers, which glance up so beautifully and joyously at the light, ye whom I trusted, and loved, and kissed; say ye lovely, gracious beings, can ye alleviate, can ye help me?

### SPIRITS OF THE FLOWERS (*softly and sadly*).

We can not.

FRID.

Ye pale dwarfs, which dwell in cliffs and stones! I turn to you now, and implore, implore with tears, for great is my suffering! You, too, weep the death of Balder. O! certainly, goodness like gold dwells within your bosoms. Deny me not. Give healing; give help!



THE DWARFS (*roughly.*)

No!

FRID.

Everywhere refusal! . . . . that is hard. Nature abandons me. Mighty All-Father! wilt thou also do so? To thy heaven I venture to lift my hands, and pray for that life which I received as a gift from thee. Burns not thy evening-heaven so gloriously in the light of thy countenance? Dost thou not look down upon the earth with love, and on the beings whom thou hast created? All-Father! listen to my prayer! Let me live! Let me, at least, once more witness the return of my bridegroom; let me yet once see, and embrace my Dag! And if thou grantest my request—send me a sign. Let a star fall, let a sough pass through the grove! [Pauses.

All is hushed! It is silent as the grave. The red flames of evening expire, and the welkin grows dark. Denied even here! Denied or unheard. It is then certain! I must die!

[Retires in silence.

KUMBA (*comes forth*).

Beautiful! glorious! She sighed; she prayed like me, and was unheard like me. Now are we alike, daughter of kings. Pleasure sits like a cramp in my heart. For this moment of enjoyment have thanks, mighty Grimgerda!

## SCENE IV.

*A Room in the Castle. FRID lies on a couch.  
It is deep twilight.*

FRID.

Long, long hours, how heavily ye stride on ; and nothing affords one moment of rest or forgetfulness. The worm gnaws, and eats even deeper into the tree of my life. *Hresvelger*, devourer of corpses !—thou who sittest at the northern end of heaven, and waftest with thy wings—I hear thy cold wind murmur around me. O I am sick, sick even to the soul ! Darkness has obtained power over me ! My Dag is absent !

I shall die. I shall quit the friendly earth. I shall relinquish my chosen consort, never more to be enlightened by his glance, never more led by his hand. How will it be with me ? They tell of heavenly dwellings, where the noble and the just find entrance when they issue from Hel's dark realm. What are they ? Are they indeed for me, and how will it be with me in them ? Shall I never see again my beloved king ? Shall I love him still, when death chills my heart ? Ah, what is my life without my love ! How uncertain, how desolate, pale and wild is all in the realm of shadows !

I shall die ! I feel how my life dwindles away. Shall it sink into eternal night ? But if all here in

life—love, virtue, suffering, patience, should be in vain——O bitter, bitter thought!

Good All-Father, no! That cannot be. I will hope, I will trust in thee. Thou didst create the sun and love—thou must be as good as thou art powerful. I will put my head beneath thy hand, and will praise thee even in the embrace of torture. When my tears fall, they shall not accuse thee. Forgive my weakness, my complaints! They will soon be over. I have loved thee, and trusted in thee. I will love thee and trust in thee still, and in my love will find strength to bear my fate. *[A pause.]*

How peaceful is it become within my bosom! I breathe more easily. Methinks that a breath of life is breathed upon my forehead. It grows light.

*[A radiant Light-Elf appears at the foot of FRID's bed.]*

What an apparition! My eyes are dazzled!

*[She covers her eyes with her hands. After a moment she again looks up.]*

Is it still there? Beautiful, radiant being! whose splendour is like that of the sun, whose countenance is mild as that of a vernal sky. Who art thou? And whence?

LIGHT-ELF.

My home is the pale azure space. I am of the race of elves, a guardian genius for mankind.

FRID.

O thou comest to me as a messenger of life and

gladness! Thou bringest me certainly some of the apples of Iduna, which have power to renew the youth even of the gods. Thou comest to restore to me health and happiness—my heart tells me so. Or why else shouldst thou come so kindly and radiantly? The gods have sent thee to me to put an end to this bitter trial, to give me again my Dag! Why is thy mild glance so powerful? Why dost thou quench thy clear beams? Ah, shine, shine, gracious being! Kindle with thy light the beams of life again in my bosom.

LIGHT-ELF (*sorrowfully*).

Daughter of man! I cannot!

FRID.

Cannot? Art thou not sent hither by gracious powers to raise and gladden?

LIGHT-ELF.

I came to console thee—to make thy death less bitter.

FRID.

Must I then die?

LIGHT-ELF.

The Nornor have determined it.

## FRID.

The goddesses of Fate? The inexorable, the fearful! What have I done to them? Why do they desire my death?

## LIGHT-ELF.

Daughter of man, I do not know. The children of Alfhem are permitted to know the will of the Mighty One, but not to penetrate its causes.

## FRID.

Then why comest thou to me? Why shouldst thou, by awaking fresh hopes, awaken fresh pangs? Leave me! I can die without thee. Leave me! Thy light gives me pain.

*[The LIGHT-ELF retires, and waits at the bottom of the room like a faint glimmer.]*

## FRID.

Is he gone? I was impatient, hasty! How weak I am! And he came to give me consolation — But what? Do I not see yonder, although feeble, his friendly gleam? O come again, thou lovely, gracious being! Pardon the weakness of the dying. Come back! and if thou hast comfort to give me, speak to me, and strengthen my soul —

*[The LIGHT-ELF returns, but surrounds himself only with a feeble glow. FRID proceeds.]*

Thou art very good, and it does my heart good.

I feel that to thee I can open my innermost heart. See, friendly being, I have suffered much in a short time; and my own anguish has made my eyes quick to perceive the sufferings of mortals. It has seemed to me that nothing was good on earth; and there have been moments in which I have doubted of the goodness of the gods—of all that makes life valuable; for all under the sun was uncertain and changeable—all flowers blooming only to wither—all creatures born only to die.

LIGHT-ELF.

Does not the heaven vault itself eternally over the changeable earth, embracing it from morning till evening? So does the All-Father surround the world, and bear it in his faithful embrace. The sun continues for ever the same; and in the sun thou beholdest an image of the All-Father's ever-watching eye!

FRID.

Yet war exists on earth; and the old legends prognosticate a fearful strife, in which the earth, and men, and gods shall perish.

LIGHT-ELF.

They will rise again, glorified. *One God*, mighty, just, and good, will then reign in all. Balder will again live upon the earth, and all evil will disappear from it. O daughter of man! the path of life is strife;

but the goal is peace, and the means, reconciliation. A day shall come when heaven and earth become one, and gods and men, as of old, shall on the green Idavall play happily together.

FRID.

But when the powers contend, when worlds perish and are born again, O say! when shall the souls who are already gone hence find their home?

LIGHT-ELF.

Many good houses has the All-Father for the just on earth. But the most beautiful is the lofty Gimle; a house more fair than the sun, and roofed with gold. There shall faithful and word-keeping men dwell.

FRID.

Is there a home there for me? Shall my dwelling be Gimle the lofty?

LIGHT-ELF.

Daughter of man! I cannot tell thee that; for many are the races of man, and many are the houses. Perhaps Frigga will take thee up into her glorious Vingolf, amongst the blessed troops of the Assyniors. Perhaps wilt thou become one of the chosen virgins who dwell with Gefion in his heavenly palace. Thy dwelling I cannot declare; but one thing I can promise thee, in the name of the mighty gods—life after death!

FRID.

And tell me, O tell me!—for, of all things, that is to me the most important—shall I, beyond death, see again my beloved king, my bridegroom?

LIGHT-ELF.

Is thy soul strong in its love to him?

FRID.

Without him life has no value for me; but to purchase immortality for him, I will myself become nothing.

LIGHT-ELF.

O then rejoice, daughter of man! For if thy love is stronger than death, then death can never again have power to separate you.

FRID.

Almighty and good gods! What sayest thou?

LIGHT-ELF.

After death thou shalt become his Fylgia, and guide him through all life's dispensations. In his dreams thou canst approach him, and whisper in his ears thy eternal truth; thou canst warn him of the dangers which menace him, of the foe who seeks his life. When he reposes from his fatigues in war, thou



canst draw near to him in the shape of a bird, and enchant his soul with song. Changed into the loveliest rose, thou canst breathe fragrance for him, and in fragrance impart thy love. When a treacherous enemy lies in wait for him, thirsting for his blood, thou canst take his form, and the traitor shall cast his spear at thee, and pierce—only the air! But thou weepest?! . . . . .

## FRID.

For joy! How delightful are thy words, beautiful child of the azure welkin. Why do they not let death become bright? I shall no longer fear the time which separates me from earthly life, since, O my Dag! I shall then better be able to accompany and serve thee than I am in this mortal shape. But tell me more, O spirit of light! tell under what circumstances his death-hour also shall arrive!

## LIGHT-ELF.

His Fylgia can cause him to fall with honour amid the glory of battle and victory. For him the house of spirits cannot be dark, for thou wilt be there to receive him. The King of Shadows will unite thee to thy consort.

## FRID.

Beautiful, but wild sound thy words. Shudderings pass through me. Dark seems to me life in the kingdom of the dead. Yet love lives there, and in

the Spirits' house I shall meet my consort. But afterwards, O Spirit of Light!—afterwards—shall he leave me? May I accompany him to Odin's radiant halls? May I not sit there on the seat by his side, and fill his cup with wine?

LIGHT-ELF.

Mortal! ask no more. No more can I tell. Deep are the councils of the gods, and the children of Alfhem cannot fathom them. Many a secret rests yet in the breast of the mighty; many a beauty, many a strength, which one day shall be revealed. Many stars, yet unknown, shall be kindled in the All-Father's heaven.

FRID.

And the life which shall be kindled in this celestial home—shall it no more die?

LIGHT-ELF.

That is known to the gods; we know it not.

FRID.

Radiant pictures hast thou given me, but surrounded by darkness. My soul is sorrowful.

LIGHT-ELF.

O daughter of man! Complain not, but humble thyself before the will of the gods. For too insigni-

ficant is man, that the gods on his account should lay open their sacred depths. Be satisfied with the light which their goodness bestows, and sink consoled into the All-Father's embrace. [*He disappears.*]

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## SCENE V.

*A wild Scene of Rocks. It is night.*

KUMBA.

Where am I? . . . I have lost my way. Around me glide the spectres of night, and over me thunders the Avenger. It is so dark both without and within my bosom; is so stifling. Air! light!

[*Thunder and lightning. A tree near KUMBA falls headlong. She darts forward, and seeks refuge in a cleft of the rocks.*]

What was that? Ha! merely a tree which fell, struck by the thunderbolt. Why do I tremble? Why am I terrified? Are not these bare uplands familiar to me? Are they not pale scenes out of my soul's thunder-night? [*A pause.*]

Why is it now so hushed, so silent? This silence is torture. Why gleam the wan stars so wildly over the crags? The whole sky is one cloud. Can they see through the clouds? What comes sailing there over the black ridge of rocks? Ah, merely a cloud, a dark thunder-cloud. It shrouds the stars;—good!

—I am tired of wandering about!—I have long gone round as in a magic circle;—I must rest.

[*Pauses. KUMBA leans against a rock, and afterwards proceeds more calmly.*

It is the hour when the wilderness is alive; when its miscreations, born at midnight, roam forth to visit the dwellings of man. The moon, the sun of dark spirits, sends abroad her wan beams to light them in their nocturnal way. There rides Mara on her dragon-steed, she who stifled King Vanland in his pleasant sleep, before he could say farewell to his family. There rise Dödmän and Dvalin's daughter from the bogs, and with peering eyes creep small spirits forth from their caves. Painful feelings, wicked thoughts go they to awaken in the souls of those who rest on their beds. They seek to create disquiet, I seek rest. I seek the sorceress, she who deceived me. I will compel her to keep her promise. But it is so dark; I cannot find again the way to her house. Who shall shew it to me? [*A whirlwind.*

Ha! the whirlwind, the spirit of the sorceress! That tells me that the old woman is not far off.

[*A fresh whirlwind.*

Again! Good. I come Grimgerda. Have thanks for thy strengthening summons.

[*Thunder and lightning.*

Why quakest thou, tree, till thy very roots tremble? Why this howling in the wood? Joturen makes

such a riot amongst the rocky hills that the giant-cauldrons ring. Startled creep the dwarfs back into their hiding-places, terrified at the thunder of the gods. Cowardly creatures of earth! Cold drops of perspiration, indeed, stand on my brow; but I shrink not away like you! Lighten, lighten, Father Thor, angry ruler of the cloudy air; and if I must be thy Thrall after death, then is it only reasonable that for once thou shouldst serve me, and light up my earthly way with thy flaming glances.

[*Fierce lightnings, amid which KUMBA disappears among the crags.*

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## SCENE VI.

*A black mountain Cave. Within glimmers a red fire. A kettle stands on the fire; three Vipers hang over it, out of whose mouths venom drops. The Sorceress Gringerda stirs the kettle while she mutters softly and makes mystic signs. Black-elves, wicked Disor, and Imps, move themselves restlessly in the cave. Two Wolves watch its entrance.*

## IMPS.

What is that which rustles?  
What is that which bustles  
In the wood and the dark out there?  
A woman cometh hither!  
Ah! now for a sly joke with her!  
Quick! and we'll seize her ere she is aware!

## GRIMGERDA.

Silence, witch-pack! to your places, or I shall teach you! If I receive company, what is that to you? If ye hold not your ungovernable tongues I will turn you into stones—as I once did with some of you—and you shall have to lick up the rain. Back into your caves, I say! Intoxicate yourselves with the substantial poison-fumes, and sleep in peace till I need you. Only my choice attendants shall remain near me. Out of the way, bantlings!

*[The Imps being terrified away, four Shadow-shapes of a wild aspect remain about the Sorceress. The Wolves raise themselves and howl. At the same time enters KUMBA with a pale but defying face. GRIMGERDA strikes with her magic wand on the floor. The Wolves lie down, and KUMBA remains standing at the entrance of the Cave.]*

## GRIMGERDA.

Silence there, presumptuous child of man! I know thee.

## KUMBA.

Dost thou know Kumba, the bondwoman's daughter? My feet mayst thou chain down, but not my will, my tongue.

## GRIMGERDA.

Perhaps that too—if I wish it. But I wish it not—now. Come nearer. Why art thou come hither?

KUMBA.

To warn thee, witch, to keep thy vow.

GRIMGERDA.

What? thou dost not speak civilly.

KUMBA.

Give me rest! Give me rest! Thou promised to give me rest. But thou hast deceived me.

GRIMGERDA.

Speak not so loudly. Thou wilt waken my little ones who sleep.

KUMBA.

They sleep! It is now long since I have slept at all!

GRIMGERDA.

What dost thou want?

KUMBA.

Every thing. O Grimgerda! if thou hast a human heart in thy bosom, then conceive my distress, and help me. The strength which thou gavest me is gone. The tranquillity which I felt at one time is gone; an anguish consumes me, more tormenting, more horrible, than that which I experienced before my crimes. The light of the sun terrifies me; the mur-

mur of the trees makes me tremble ; no sleep rests on my eyelids ; no tear refreshes them ; and I cannot look upon her whom I have murdered, upon her who now wears away patiently in despair, without feeling my heart transpierced as with a poisoned dart. The dart is called—remorse. Remorse drives me to thee to-day. I will have my crime undone. Gringerda ! thou who gavest the disease, knowest also the antidote. I entreat thee for a means to counteract the poison which kills the daughter of kings, the means to restore her again to life.

GRINGERDA.

Doth the arrow, once discharged, stop and turn back in its flight ? Ask the stream to flow back to its source ; the ridge of rocks to bend itself according to the changing current of the wind ! Foolish mortal ! That which is done cannot be undone ; and a strong spirit denies not its own work.

KUMBA.

Thou can'st not ?

GRINGERDA.

Cannot, because I will not ;—will not, because Jernskog's daughter cannot vacillate and repent.

KUMBA.

Can gold purchase salvation for the daughter of kings ?



GRIMGERDA.

I love gold ; but I will not deceive thee. Gold and treasure cannot save her. She must die.

KUMBA.

It is determined then. She must die, and I——  
I am miserable !

GRIMGERDA.

Poor child !

KUMBA.

Dost thou pity me ? Thou understandest me then ; and there lives a heart in thy bosom. O Grimgerda ! be good to me ! I have suffered so much ! Hast thou, too, suffered ? Knowest thou the sorrow which devours the heart ?

GRIMGERDA.

I understand thee, and — it grieves me for thee. Here, my child, eat and strengthen thyself. Then we will talk further.

KUMBA.

No, no ! I cannot eat.

GRIMGERDA.

Such good is not often offered. It gives clearness and learning in a variety of ways.

KUMBA.

Give me peace! Give me a draught out of the cup of forgetfulness.

GRIMGERDA.

The dead only drink that.

KUMBA.

Give me death then! Let one of thy serpents sting me.

GRIMGERDA.

Serpents do not sting their like.

KUMBA.

Thy words, Grimgerda, sting all the more. But I will forgive thee all, if thou wilt but give me death and forgetfulness,—eternal, if possible.

GRIMGERDA.

*They* only, who have not done something on earth memorable, *something great*, in good or in *evil*, can in death taste of the cup of oblivion.

KUMBA.

Woe is me! The draught is not for me then. Listen! There is a sleep, a trance, between life and death, in which man feels neither snow nor rain, neither day nor the heat of the sun; knows nothing,

feels nothing, except a reluctance to awake. Say, canst thou not plunge me into that?

## GRIMGERDA.

Thou desirest that which can alone be the lot of mighty spirits. Kumba, daughter of the bondwoman, thou art not ripe for that.

## KUMBA.

That too, dost thou deny me? (*wildly*). Well then, witch! discharge thy vow in another manner. I bought it dearly, and will not have done it for nothing. Thou promised my soul rest, and thou shalt keep thy promise, or I swear by Nastrand . . . .

## GRIMGERDA.

Silence, wretched slave! Darest thou to menace me? Abase thyself! Creep like a worm in the dust at my feet, or thou shalt ride on the wolf, and be stung by serpents. Fall down this instant, and beg pardon, or . . . .

## KUMBA.

Or what? Dost thou think that thou canst frighten me, Grimgerda? The pure light of the sun can terrify me, and the whispering of spirits in the wood can make me tremble; but thee—thee I fear not! Shew me the torture which thou hast in thy power that is greater than that which I already know. Let

thy wolves tear me to pieces. I will laugh at it. But in the hour itself of my death, dread thou me, Grimgerda! It is not equal between us. What have I to lose, to fear? Nothing! But thou, witch, canst lose thy power and thy wealth. Tremble then! for I feel in my suffering heart a power which is greater than thine! Tremble, at the curse which in the hour of death shall issue from my pallid lips—tremble!

GRIMGERDA (*aside*).

Ha! Strength! strength! Great strength! Good; thou shalt serve a still greater cunning. [*aloud*.

Kumba! To what purpose this childish insolence and defiance? Why wilt thou provoke only an increase of thy misery? Be quiet, be obedient, and I both can and will keep thee.

KUMBA.

Ah, say how! Pardon my defiance, O Grimgerda. I am still and obedient. Speak, speak!

GRIMGERDA.

All the torments of thy soul proceed from this, that thou standest on the half-way. The escape from thy misery is called *completion*!

KUMBA.

Speak more plainly.

GRIMGERDA.

Enter fully and for ever into my service. The first matter which I will give thee to complete shall be the ratification of our compact.

KUMBA.

And what shall be my reward?

GRIMGERDA.

Thou shall acquire great power already in this life. After death, I will awake thee, and doubly great power shall be given thee to injure the great on the earth, for no power exceeds that of the departed spirit. Thou shalt become as one of mine own, as one of the mighty Disor, which thou hast seen around me.

KUMBA.

Have they peace?

GRIMGERDA.

Observe them.

KUMBA.

I see no pain in their features. There seems to play over their sallow lips a smile; but it is not glad. The countenances of some appear restless, and yet on the point of being changed into stone.

GRIMGERDA.

Thou seest them now in their twilight costumes, in their night mantles, in which they recently made a journey into the world of men. But they do not always appear thus dim. When I will it, they glitter in their holiday attire, and at my beck a splendour surrounds them which surpasses that of the temple of Upsala. See for thyself.

*[The Sorceress waves a wand, and the Cave all over appears as beaming with gold. The Witch and the Disors are seen in splendid dresses, and with jewelled crowns on their heads. After a pause, GRIMGERDA speaks.]*

Now, what thinkest thou?

KUMBA.

That is grand! (*aside.*) But they are none the handsomer for it.

GRIMGERDA.

What sayest thou?

KUMBA.

I say that is grand!

GRIMGERDA.

Yes, I think so. The like shall not be seen in the dwelling of the most ostentatious Jarl.

*[She makes another sign with the staff, and the splendour disappears.]*

## KUMBA.

But it seemed to me that the gold was red as glowing fire, and that I saw lizards and spiders running about amongst the precious stones.

## GRIMGERDA.

That is because thou art unaccustomed to such pomp; and therefore it causes, as it were, spiders' webs before thy eyes. But not only splendour and affluence are here offered by us, but joy too; and thou mayst well believe that it goes often right merrily here. Here one knows neither anguish nor remorse. Here we eat and drink well,—sleep when we will; and between whiles, dance and frisk to our hearts' content. Thou shalt have a specimen.

[GRIMGERDA blows a horn. *The Cave seems at once to become alive. Black Elves, Dwarfs, and Spirits swarm forth, and riot about in a wild dance.*

KUMBA (*aside*).

Afgrund's music to Afgrund's dance. Is this joy? No, it is frenzy!

(*Aloud to the Imps, that will drag her into the dance*).

Away from me, ye wild beasts! ye foul hobgoblins! I have no desire for your joy. Grimgerda, let the tasteless dance have an end. It is irksome.

## GRIMGERDA.

It is not so easy to compel them to cease when

they are become well heated in the dance. Cold water must then be had recourse to.

*[She strikes with the witch-wand on the rocks. Streams of water spring forth upon the dancing goblins, who fly, howling and hurrying, terrified into their dens. The Witch laughs.]*

GRIMGERDA.

This merriment moves thee not, because thou art unused to it. But ask my imps whether they think the dance tedious. When thou hast been some time with us, thou wilt find it as delightful as they do.

KUMBA (*sighs*).

GRIMGERDA.

Well, bondmaiden, hast thou a desire to become free in my service?

KUMBA (*indignantly*).

Like one of these?

GRIMGERDA.

No, freer. Listen, Kumba. I mean well by thee, and have something great in store for thee. I have discovered in thee a higher power than exists in all those who are about me, a power worthy of mine. I will give thee a commission, which an ordinary spirit could not accomplish. If thou executest it according



to my instructions, the torment in thy bosom shall not only cease for ever, but I will regard thee as my daughter. Thou shalt partake of my wealth; and thy power to injure the great, and to command the low, shall become like mine. Thou shalt partake with me my dwelling; and when thou wilt, thou shalt change it into a gorgeous palace, and adorn thyself with . . . .

KUMBA.

Let us make the business short. At what price wilt thou have my soul?

GRIMGERDA.

Listen! and observe well my words. In the strongly-fortified castle, on the other side of the water, dwells a Jarl, named Harold Sigurdson . . . . .

KUMBA.

I know him. A handsome, and a brave man, and a friend of King Dag.

GRIMGERDA.

I hate him; but still more fiercely do I hate his wife, the proud Herborg.

KUMBA.

Very well.

GRIMGERDA.

They have a child—a boy of three years old. His parents' greatest delight.

KUMBA.

That beautiful child I have carried in my arms!

GRINGERDA.

Thou shalt kill that child.

KUMBA.

I?!—A little child?!

GRINGERDA.

And before its heart's-blood cools, thou shalt—  
drink it.

KUMBA.

Detestable!

GRINGERDA.

That only can for ever take away thy soul's  
sickness.

KUMBA.

No, no! I cannot do it.

GRINGERDA.

By this means only canst thou acquire my friendship, and participate in my affluence and my power; by this alone can the bondwoman's daughter become a free and mighty being.

KUMBA.

Great gods preserve me !

GRIMGERDA.

Dost thou imagine that the gods will trouble themselves about thee? But I understand thy remorse, Kumba. Nature shudders at extraordinary deeds; but it is precisely this which separates the strong from the despicable spirit,—the power to conquer the weakness of nature.

KUMBA.

Short and good, I will not do it! Do with me what thou wilt—I do it not!

GRIMGERDA.

Do it not? Do it not? We will see that! Thou shalt, thou must, thou shalt! Thou goest not hence alive, if thou refusest to do it.

KUMBA.

Let thy wolves rend me to pieces,—I will not do it. My hate, impelled by wild passions, I could seek to gratify; but an innocent child, which never offended me—no! so fallen I am not. Thanks, Grimgerda, that thou restorest my strength. I can now, miserable as I am, detest and despise thy treasures.

## GRIMGERDA.

Art thou proud of thy cowardice? Offspring of wretches, go! Thou art not worthy to be near the sorceress. Go, paltry one, and remain the slave of the Jarls.

## KUMBA.

Better that, than to be like thee.

## GRIMGERDA.

Wretch! dost thou exalt thyself above me? Miserable, cowardly murderess! who hast not the strength to resist evil, hast not the courage to be strong in crime. Contemptible slave, be gone! My wolves would loathe thy spongy carcass! Go! but bear with thee the curse which I announce to thee—"Thou shalt neither find rest here, nor hereafter! Vacillating, dizzy, wavering, thou shalt wander about from morrow to morrow, and wear away thy life in anguish. Thou shalt wither as the thistle withers in the narrow clefts of the rocks. Thou shalt faint in the desert like the hunted wolf, and the sons of lamentation shall extend to thee a bitter drink of the poisonous tears of regret. After death shall thy dastard soul reside amid the fog in the marshes of the corpse-coast, and in vain shalt thou attempt to lift thyself out of it to the high land. In vain shalt thou stretch forth thy shadowy arms to embrace a creature that can love

thee. Alone and miserable, shalt thou be tossed about by the wind, and seek earth's abodes only to terrify the innocent child, which loses itself in thy neighbourhood; and thy life and thy being shall be—unblessedness!

KUMBA (*coldly*).

Thou tellest only what I already know. Hast thou no better curse, witch!

GRIMGERDA.

Yes, I have; and though it costs me dear, it shall be pronounced—to crush thee. Know then, Kumba, that there is *one* who could save thee; who could give thee rest here on the earth, and after death bear up thy spirit to a glorious lot in the everlasting light—yes; if thou hadst sacrificed to him thy presumption, thy revenge, thy hate, as he desired of thee. But against him hast thou raved; the deliverer hast thou cast from thee, and eternally hereafter shall his shape haunt thee, punishing and avenging——Behold him, and tremble!

[GRIMGERDA *waves her magic wand, and pronounces the following words with great exertion and with averted face.*

Thou whom I saw with the pale Hel! Thou whose countenance I cannot endure to behold!——White god without spot, without malice! Darling of the

creator! Balder the good! Thee do I evoke to the circle of the earth! Thee do I call in the might of the powers of Afgrund to appear upon this spot, in order to avenge thyself! In the awful name of the eternal justice——

*[A bright light fills the bottom of the Cave. In the midst of it appears the beautiful shape of a youth full of majesty and mildness, who fixes on KUMBA a severe and painful look. GRIMGERDA remains standing, but with averted head, as if turned to stone. KUMBA gives a piercing shriek of inexpressible agony, and falls with outstretched arms on the earth. The scene vanishes; all becomes dark again, and a shrill laugh of mockery is raised by the Goblins who come into active motion.]*

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#### SCENE VII.

FRID *reclines in a half-sitting posture on a splendid Couch near the window. KUMBA stands at her feet and contemplates her. The sun is going down.*

FRID.

Soon—soon will all be over! Soon shall I journey to the second light. For the last time do I bow my head before thee, O earth's glorious sun! Thanks that thou yet a while wilt warm my bosom with thy

beams. Thanks for this last friendly caress. I see, but I feel it not. My life's sun also goes down, but the peace of even has descended on my heart, and I feel it—it is beautiful to die!

Ah! even in death my dim gaze turns towards the sea, and looks earnestly for the sail of the beloved, and calls him hence. But when he comes he will no more find his bride. She has gone away, but merely the better to follow and serve him. My soul is reconciled to death.

KUMBA (*aside*).

That which stirs within me no mortal can comprehend.

FRID.

Yes, my spirit is reconciled; all murmuring, all complaint, is departed. Mine eye, indeed, is dim; but one thing is yet clear and certain to me—death will not destroy my love, will not separate me from the beloved. See there shines already in the cloud Asabron, surrounded by the roarings of the heavenly water. Welcome to me, O sign of the favour of the gods, which shews me the way that I shall travel. I come quickly! All-Father! I am ready, for I am at peace with heaven, at peace with the earth!

KUMBA (*aside*).

How bright she grows! How I blacken! Woe!

I hate her no longer. Hate has turned its point against myself.

FRID.

Kumba! My faithful attendant! Thanks for the affection thou hast shewn me on earth. Take this costly jewel in remembrance of me. Be free, Kumba; be rich and happy!

KUMBA.

Daughter of kings, I desire only one thing of thee.

FRID.

And what?

KUMBA.

Thy hatred. Know that thou diest by my hand; by the poison received from the bondmaiden. Know that she, like a snake, bit fast into thy heart, and sucked pleasure from thy torments; know that she long hated thee . . . . .

FRID.

Almighty gods! Thou, Kumba? Ah, wherefore?

KUMBA.

For thy happiness; for thy beauty; for thy union with King Dag, whom I love; for the injustice of the gods, who gave thee all, and me nothing; for the pangs which envy and jealousy occasioned me! For all this have I hated thee, and taken revenge.



FRID.

O Kumba! Kumba! Thou couldst think thus of me; and I held thee so dear, and put such trust in thee.

KUMBA.

I have deceived thee. This hand has murdered thee. Abhor me; hate me!

FRID.

I sink into the All-Father's embrace. Thy hand gave me poison; but a higher hand has sealed my doom. I have gained by it, for I know that life and love will continue beyond death. For myself I complain no more, but for thee my soul sorroweth. Before I go, take my forgiveness.

KUMBA.

Canst thou *forgive* me?!

FRID.

O Kumba, hate not; I cannot hate, and therefore has my soul peace; but bitterness only is a torment in death. Thou hast not done me much wrong, Kumba! Thy mind was exasperated,—I understand it now. Pardon me, that in thy presence I was so happy, and did not notice thy suffering! Nay,—gaze not so wildly upon me;—give me thy hand. Let a

tear of reconciliation moisten thine eye. Thou wert unhappy. That was the fault.

KUMBA (*aside*).

Exists goodness so great, love so unbounded? Woe is me! What have I done? My heart will burst!

FRID.

Thy lips move wildly, but I hear no sound. Dost thou remember, Kumba, the years of our childhood? Rememberest thou, when thou first came to me wounded, mishandled. These hands healed thy wounds, these eyes wept over thee. I loved thee at that moment, and I have loved thee ever since,—and now my spirit cannot depart in peace if thou hatest me. A stern power of witchcraft must have bound up thy heart. But thou shalt not thus harden thyself. Come nearer, Kumba, I will yet once more weep over thee.

KUMBA.

Thou has transpierced! . . . Behold me at thy feet. Hear my last prayer!

FRID.

My Kumba! speak.

KUMBA.

Let me die with thee. Let the same pile which sends thy soul on high, bear also to the other world that of thy guilty servant. In the realm of shadows I will slave for thee.

FRID.

Follow me in death. The God of gods will then determine our fate. Perhaps in a higher light, the daughter of kings and the bondmaiden are merely empty names. Let thy soul cling to mine; never was it nearer to me. We will both watch over him, whom we both loved.

KUMBA.

O these tears! they are a transport! Let me bathe thy hand with them.

FRID.

Bathe my hand with them; they warm my heart. O look out on the sea, Kumba!

KUMBA. .

Gods! it is he!

FRID.

He comes! Methought that was his white flag  
..... my eyes are dim. He comes!

KUMBA.

Thou wilt not see him! Thou diest! O thou must, must hate me!

FRID.

No . . . . . I forgive thee. Forgive thyself!

KUMBA.

Now! thou diest!

FRID (*with arms extended towards the sea*).

I go . . . . . to the second light! Thou, O my Dag, never shall I see thee again! [*She dies.*]

KUMBA.

Dead! Yes, dead! It is over! I will die also. Powers of vengeance, your judgment is upon me. She pardoned me, but can you pardon? In your hands I leave my guilty soul. Mighty Thor, accept the offering; and if with wild wings thou pursue round the earth my peace-abandoned soul, I will not sigh, I will not complain! I have deserved it. But one day—I know it—comes a greater than thou! . . . . . Will he take compassion on me? Will he permit the repentant spirit to find a quiet shore? . . . . . O can there be pardon? can there be atonement?!

[*She sinks down at the foot of FRID's bed.*]

## LOW AND DISTANT CHORUS OF SPIRITS OF LIGHT.

From the depths, and  
From the heights, will  
There be heard a voice,  
That to captive and to mourner  
Shall proclaim—" Rejoice!"

Dumb shall grow each  
Elfin chorus,  
But in heaven's acclaim—  
Loftier spirits  
Shall adore the  
World-Redeemer's name.

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LESSER STORIES.

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## A NOTE TO THE PUBLIC.

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COURTEOUS PUBLIC,

A book is a traveller who betakes himself into the world, and is commonly provided with a letter of recommendation, either in the form of a Preface, in which the Author modestly steps forward, and prays to find acceptance; or in a Postscript, by which the Author recommends himself. If the book be its own letter of recommendation, it is indeed the very best of all. In the very easily comprehensible anxiety that it may not be the case here, one hastens, first of all, to send in a little note, which may, in the warmest manner, recommend to the considerate kindness of the public this little book, and, at the same time, its little

AUTHORESS.



# AXEL AND ANNA:

OR,

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN TWO LOVERS.\*

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## AXEL TO ANNA.

FROM henceforth let the February storm roar at my windows, destroy them, burst into my chamber, and cover me, and every thing that is to be found there, with his ice-mantle; henceforth let my uncle thunder and curse, let the maids scold, the dogs howl, the parrots scream. In my heart is spring—the world is an Eden, human beings are angels; and I am happy. Anna loves me! O tell it me once again! Is it then really true—is it possible? Anna, do you love me?

\* The original title is literally “Correspondence between two Stories;” which, however, conveys no idea to an English reader. The Swedes, like most of the continental nations and the Scotch, live several families in one house, each occupying a story, or suite of apartments. These lovers, as will be seen, lived thus, and carried on their correspondence from different stories of the same house.

M. H.

## ANNA TO AXEL.

I was yesterday at a ball—I danced—heard compliments,—nothing pleased me. Wherefore? Axel was not there! Is not this an answer to your question, Axel?

## AXEL TO ANNA.

WITH A ROSE.

Take the rose! In it so fair  
Is thy charming visage beaming;  
In the rose's crimson gleaming  
Shines love's image also there.

Yet I would not see displayed,  
Type of our love in it either;  
Roses fade away and wither,  
But our love will never fade.

From the days of Adam even,  
Were they different from each other;  
Earth is but the rose's mother,  
Love, it is the child of heaven.

## ANNA TO AXEL.

The rose is placed in water, your poem rests on my heart; and yet I am not content. What does this heart then desire? To-day it is five days since I have seen you. If you could only persuade your uncle to call upon us—but I know that is impossible. Therefore, peace, peace, spirit of disquiet!

## AXEL TO ANNA.

O that I could cause an earthquake, so that the two stories should fall together—that I could stamp the floor through, and suddenly descend to where my thoughts and feelings always dwell! These, Anna, are simple possibilities in comparison with the impossibility of making the wilful old man move one step. I have stood a whole hour arguing with him. One must live *with* the world, whilst one lives *in* the world.—“No!” “Uncle, you look rather unwell?” “No!” “Uncle, you must take some relaxation.” “No!” “Talk politics with lively neighbours.” “No!” “Uncle, you become a hermit.” “No!” “Dear Uncle.” “No!” My dear, best Uncle.” “No, and no, and no!”

After considering this chain of denials, which is more insurmountable than the Alps or Pyrenees, I proposed to myself several questions. “Wilt thou, through longing, bring a consumption upon thyself?” “No!” “Or the jaundice, from pure vexation?” “No; at least not in this instance.” “Wilt thou make thyself happy?” “Yes.” “See Anna?” “Yes.” Make the essay now?” “Yes.”—Hurrah!

## AXEL TO ANNA.

Did not succeed. Closed doors. Your aunt has a cold—receives no visit. But now I *will* and *shall* see you. I know what I will do. I will go and place

myself in the street, directly opposite your window. And should you not come to the window, I will stand there until I turn to stone.

ANNA TO AXEL.

Now, in the rain? That I forbid. Do you not see that the rain pours down in streams from heaven.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Wet as a sea-god, but happy as—as myself (there is no happier one), I sit again in my room and write to you upon a thick pile of paper, which I should copy for my uncle. But now I am content with all. I have seen you. I find every thing beautiful—even my uncle's style. How charming you are, Anna! You have really more than one point of resemblance with the Crown Princess, without which, now, no one can be pretty. She has large, heavenly blue eyes. Yours are certainly smaller, but equally heavenly. Truly she has *dark*-brown hair, and you light-brown; but the form of the little head—of the bewitching little head—is completely the same; and when I only think of your little nose,—like hers, so fine, small, and enchanting,—O I fall into ecstasy!

ANNA TO AXEL.

But I am *not* in ecstasy, I am not charmed; I am dissatisfied, anxious. You have certainly taken cold;

you will have a cold in the head—catarrh—fever—will perhaps die! To stand a whole hour in the cold and heavy rain! Axel, I cannot pardon you!

AXEL TO ANNA.

We come to-day, towards evening, to call upon you—we come to call, my most dear uncle, and his most obedient nephew. God bless the old man for his heavenly idea! Only take care that the door of the antechamber be not locked—that we can, unobserved, enter so far that we are not met with the eternal untruth, that “the family is not at home.”

Cold in the head—catarrh! Yes, I sneeze and cough,—but only from impatience. I have fever,—but it is a fever of joy.

AXEL TO ANNA.

I could die from vexation. Did not Mr. P——, the eternal, unbearable Mr. P——, step in at the door just as we would go out? My uncle turned back; I gnashed my teeth. Mr. P—— seats himself. I double my fist. “We would just pay a visit,” I began (God knows in what tone). “We must ——” “We must put that out of our minds,” said the uncle, interrupting the words of the nephew; “it can take place another time.” I banged the door to, with such violence that Mr. P—— started up from his chair.

## ANNA TO AXEL.

*Recipe for a Cold and Fever.*

Drink three glasses of cold water, one after the other. N.B.—Only one every quarter of an hour. Between each go three times up and down the room. N.B.—Only one step is made in a minute; and at every step repeat—

Be pious and good,  
Be patient of mood.

## AXEL TO ANNA.

A bad cure; does no good. I have thought of one for myself. Lend me a curl of hair; only one, a single one from among the hundred which you have; only one—a single one. I will lay it on my mouth, on my forehead, on my eyes, on my heart. O do not refuse it me! Otherwise I shall fall most seriously ill. A lock of hair, good Anna, a single one!

## AXEL TO ANNA.

[*An hour later.*

A curl! Can you really be so cruel, and refuse it me? See, I lie on my knees and pray for it.

## AXEL TO ANNA.

[*Half an hour later.*

A curl, a curl, a curl!



AXEL TO ANNA.

*[A quarter of an hour later.]*

I beg most humbly pardon for being thus often troublesome. This time shall certainly be the last; if not——shall I have a curl, or not?

ANNA TO AXEL.

Here, you have it—bad, impatient man! I sub-join a small fragment of a conversation which was held between me and my aunt, by the light of two sleepy, pale candle-flames.

AUNT.—Men are tyrants.

I.—Yes, truly, that they are.

AUNT.—Despots who, by flatteries or by power, accomplish their wishes.

I.—Yes, yes; alas, it is so!

AUNT.—Never marry, my child.

I.—No; God forbid, dear aunt.

Sleep well, Axel.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Command me, Anna, to stand six hours in heavy rain just under your window; command me to go six

miles for a flower which you wish to have ; command me to kneel fourteen days ; command me to have all my hair cut off to stuff your pillow ; command me at the next ball, after the heart's-waltz, to dance eight times, one after the other, with the full-rigged man-of-war, the dry Mrs. N. ; command, beautiful tyrant ! I obey. Command me, above all, that I come up every evening to snuff your candle. Its weak flame seems to exercise a darkening influence upon the otherwise clear lights of your understanding.

#### ANNA TO AXEL.

I command you to-day, between twelve or one o'clock, to stand in the doorway, or to walk up and down before the house. You can then greet us, and see my beautiful new bonnet, which my cousin, Lieutenant Emil Papperto, has assured me is very becoming to me.

#### AXEL TO ANNA.

The bonnet suits you very ill. The crown is too large, the poke too small. Your face looks in it as large and round as the full moon. I beg you to make Lieutenant Papperto a present of the bonnet, and for his good taste let him himself make use of it.

If you will step this afternoon to the window you shall see me ride past on my new horse, my beautiful Hercules, which I received yesterday as a present from my uncle. I am very well satisfied with the

horse, since the five charming Miss Mullitons assured me (when I waited upon them this morning) that they had never seen such a beautiful animal.

ANNA TO AXEL.

If the beauty of a horse consists in having thick legs, a thick neck, a large head, large ears, and in galloping like a cow, Hercules is certainly unusually beautiful, quite unusually beautiful. If my counsel should be followed, I would beg Mr. Axel W. to make the five charming Miss Mullitons a present of the horse, and for their good taste let them make use of him.

AXEL TO ANNA.

If Miss Anna L. were somewhat gentler, and less biting, it would be far more becoming.

ANNA TO AXEL.

If Mr. Axel W. think of paying a visit on the story below him, I must inform him herewith that the family is not at home.

AXEL TO ANNA.

If Miss Anna L. believed Mr. Axel W. had any such intention, I must herewith inform her that she was mistaken.

AXEL TO ANNA.

*[Two days later.]*

Anna's name-day! I have ridden six miles to-day

in the early morning to fetch out of the Baron R's hothouse this bouquet, which Anna, I hope, will not be so cruel as to scorn.

AXEL TO ANNA.

I hope that you have received the bouquet. It was certainly not particularly beautiful; but in this season flowers are difficult to get.

AXEL TO ANNA.

For three nights I have not closed my eyes. I really believe that animal Hercules, which I have ridden several days, shakes one too much. To-day I have spoken with Franz Kunninger, and he will take the creature off my hands, although perhaps for only half the sum he cost. But I do not ask after that if I can only get rid of him.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Anna!

ANNA TO AXEL.

Axel! I have thrown my new bonnet into the fire. I think my aunt would receive a visit this evening, if any one came; that is to say, if a certain old gentleman came—young ones she cannot endure. Yet I am of the opinion, that a certain young gentleman, who should steal in behind the back of a certain old one, would produce no bad effect.

## AXEL TO ANNA.

My angel-girl, what a fortunate concurrence of circumstances! Your aunt receives visits this evening, and my excellent uncle wishes this evening to pay visits. He brushes the dust off himself with such zeal, that I could kiss him for it.

He has fully determined that the acquaintance shall commence to-day, since he has remarked that his servant is paying court to your aunt's housemaid, and to this he says he will put an end.

I have given the old gentleman various rules for behaviour. I have told him that now gentlemen kiss the hands of the ladies. He answered that this was a stupid fashion; *I* find it full of spirit. O Anna! thus I can once more kiss your hand,—your hand,—O joy!

Should Mr. P—— come now, I strike him dead.

## AXEL TO ANNA.

Millions of years would I give for an evening such as that of yesterday.

Anna, you looked like an angel with your curling hair and white dress—and a good advisable angel were you to me, you made me the happiest of those beings who breathe the air of this earth. How happy am I, and how happy must you be,—you who have made me so happy! O good God, what heavenly moments has one not on this earth against which one says so much that is bad! My uncle and your aunt

did not dream that whilst they on the sofa by lamp-light were working to dissolve one engagement, we in the twilight at the window closed another. I am like another man since I feel your ring on my finger. Anna mine! My Anna! O what a good and noble being must I now become!

#### AXEL TO ANNA.

How clear is the heaven, how fresh the air! I must breathe fresh air, my happiness oppressed me. I went out, almost danced through the city, sung aloud, behaved in such a manner that every one stared at me, and I had the desire to embrace every one. In my breast is a happiness which could make happy half a world. Anna, how I love you!

#### ANNA TO AXEL.

I also am unspeakably happy. Men love more passionately; but whether better, whether truer—Axel—that we shall perhaps experience in ourselves. I also feel myself better and nobler. I will become good, gentle, true, in one word a really amiable wife, and make Axel happy. Upon this I now think, whether I walk, stand, sit; whether I sew, play, sing or read; and that causes nothing to be either done well, or at the right time. “What is the matter with thee girl?” demanded my aunt a short time since; “I think thou hast a fever, thy eyes sparkle so—dost thou feel headache?” “I feel rather something at

my heart," answered I. "I must take immediately a good dose of Hoffmann's drops." Thou laughest? I also.

## AXEL TO ANNA.

"What is come to thee, boy, why art thou so absent?" asked my uncle yesterday. "Wilt thou write so? The paper upside down, the pen upside down? Boy, I believe thou art quite upside down thyself!" "Ah, uncle—have you ever been in love?" "In love, boy? Yes; but then I thought also of marrying." "Yes, I also think of doing so." "Also of doing so? When one has nothing to live upon? Has ever such a thing been heard? Let us see; thou hast monthly thirty-six shillings from me; out of this thou wilt use twelve shillings to hold thy wedding; twelve shillings to commence thy housekeeping; there yet remains to thee twelve shillings and God's mercy for thee to live upon the remainder of thy life. Nay, I congratulate thee. Sunshine for dinner, and moonshine for supper; see, one shall get quite fat upon it!"

Wretched, when people to whom nature has denied every kind of judgment will be witty! Wretched that it should just occur to him to speak of his thirty-six *shillings*!

## ANNA TO AXEL.

Did you see the poor woman with the children in

the street just opposite? How miserable they were! I cannot help them, I have nothing now; but you?

## AXEL TO ANNA.

Just now I received the money for Hercules, and more than I expected. For what do I want a horse? I can walk. I hasten.

## AXEL TO ANNA.

*[A day later.]*

They are assisted; not alone for the moment, I hope, but for ever. They have a dwelling, clothes, food, work. They can and will work. I do not speak of their joy; through excess, it resembled sorrow. I prayed her to bless you. I am most sincerely happy.

## ANNA TO AXEL.

A basketful of flowers and fruit, and undermost, five rows of Roman pearls, was brought me this morning by a little unknown girl. From whom she did not know—she had only received the command to deliver it to me. Axel, it is from you—that I know. Axel, Axel, such presents from you, who have little for yourself! I cannot receive it.

## AXEL TO ANNA.

If you will cause me a bilious fever, you will say no. Good Anna, that you accept these trifles is



my recompense—(mine, do you hear)—for wandering about the whole day, more like a beast than a man, out of pure philanthropy, without enjoying a single mouthful as big as a pin's-head; and for ultimately being obliged, at supper, to listen to a severe curtain-lecture from my uncle.

Regarding my finances, be quite easy. And the money for Hercules—should that, perhaps, lie by unused? I have money remaining. I can establish myself, my gracious lady.

#### ANNA TO AXEL.

In order to preserve you from a bilious fever, I will certainly accept this time your gift. But make me no more, I pray you; and at least, not again so soon.

#### AXEL TO ANNA.

When will that time, that happy time arrive, when I shall have the right to give you every thing, and you no longer have the right to refuse? When will the time arrive when I shall no longer require the pen as the interpreter of my feelings? When shall I speak with you—when dare to see you?

This is for me the Gordian-knot which I in vain strive to unloosen. I have the greatest desire to do like Alexander, and at one stroke to cut it through by carrying you off. After many fruitless attempts, I have perceived the impossibility of coming to you by

any usual and natural means. Now I have the most desperate designs in my head. You have certainly heard speak of the ingenious man, who, in order to embrace his mistress, set her house on fire. What do you think of him?

ANNA TO AXEL.

That he was, is, and remains, an incendiary; and of such a one I entertain the greatest horror.

AXEL TO ANNA.

To place a ladder at a window, and, upon the wings of love, float up and in at the window, is and looks so strangely thief-like. But Anna, to make a visit in a balloon has never, I believe, taken place since the time of that Turk who, according to the Persian legend, thus visited his fair one under the name of Mahomet. This would not be an impossibility; and I see possibilities in every thing, except in being longer able to live without seeing you.

ANNA TO AXEL.

To all heathenish visitors, let them enter even by ladders or in balloons, I am not at home. I declare that such a one I will not know, much less love.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Why do you never shew yourself at the window—why never go out—why is a call never accepted?

Why do you shut yourself up thus wilfully, thus eternally. Does this happen on my account?

## ANNA TO AXEL.

My best Axel, my aunt is very ill—you know this. I dare not leave her a moment. With the greatest difficulty I steal away to write to you; and beg you, for God's sake, neither set our house on fire nor break my windows. Do you think that, among phials of drops and recipes, I am particularly comfortable? But the only thing I can do, the only thing also which you must do, is to be quiet, and await the proper time.

## AXEL TO ANNA.

To be quiet! You might as well say this to the storm which now rages till the whole house trembles, I could wish that it would overturn it, if it, with a breath from the spirit of love, would cast you into my arms. Anna, what I now say, you must not take so literally. I wrestle with Fate and will bring her to yield, let this cost what it will.

## AXEL TO ANNA.

Human beings have, after all, neither leopards' nor tigers' hearts in their breasts, my Anna! Do you not believe, that if we were to disclose our love to our relatives they would allow us now and then to see each other? Anna, you are my sun, the light

of my eyes. If you conceal yourself longer, all around me will become pitch-dark.

Shall we dare the experiment? We have so little to lose by it, so much to win. Say yes!

ANNA TO AXEL.

You are right, Axel; we must make the trial. Do you speak first with your uncle; and when I have heard what he has said, I shall have more courage to reveal myself to my aunt. She is now somewhat better.

AXEL TO ANNA.

“Speak with your uncle;” this is uncommonly easily said—but *done*, that is something quite different. Do you know, my uncle is a man who has quite a peculiar humour, and above all, peculiar eyes. With these he can fix a person who is going to say something that does not please him, in such a manner that the word remains sticking in the poor fellow’s throat to all eternity; and then such a tempest rises as can certainly be compared with none in Sweden, but only with those hurricanes which rage in the West-Indian islands. In the mean while I will sew myself a fur garment out of Job’s patience and Solomon’s wisdom, and dare the attempt.

ANNA TO AXEL.

No, no; be cautious! If you believe that it will

displease him so much, and you have not courage enough, it is the best that we drive the whole attempt out of our minds.

## AXEL TO ANNA.

Also quite easily said. But before I give up a resolution which I have once taken, may hurricanes, ten times more raging than the one which I will now brave, tear me into a thousand pieces, and blow them to all parts of the world. Farewell; I am now armed for the fight, and —— I go!

## ANNA TO AXEL.

Wait, Axel, wait! Ah, my dear friend, I fear this is a precipitate step. It is possible they may not consent in the least. Besides, we are both of us still so young.

## AXEL TO ANNA.

I am in my twenty-second year, already last autumn I was one-and-twenty, therefore I am of age. You are quite seventeen.

## ANNA TO AXEL.

That is true—and perhaps we are old enough. But ah, Axel, this is the least! I see a thousand impossibilities before us. It is possible our relatives will not on any account give their consent to our union. We really have nothing, my friend! You

have no situation, no money; I equally am entirely without fortune. It would be—it is, really foolish with such narrow circumstances to wish to marry. Let us wait, my friend, and well consider, before we risk a step which I now begin to fear might separate us for ever.

AXEL TO ANNA.

I will soon procure myself a situation.

ANNA TO AXEL.

Wait, therefore, until then.

AXEL TO ANNA.

As you command. I must admire your patience and prudence.

ANNA TO AXEL.

You are not angry.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Yes.

ANNA TO AXEL.

Wherefore; best Axel, wherefore?

AXEL TO ANNA.

Ah, nonsense!

ANNA TO AXEL.

Axel, you really grieve me extremely.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Do not detain yourself, young lady, by writing unmeaning words. Lieutenant Papperto might become impatient. I saw him more than half-an-hour since go up to you.

ANNA TO AXEL.

If Lieutenant Emil Papperto will make a call upon my aunt, and she will receive him, I cannot turn him out. My good Axel, be quiet!

AXEL TO ANNA.

Ah, what! Be quiet! I do not shoot myself, neither drown, hang, nor poison myself. Oh, I am quiet—quiet and calm like you; I only think what waistcoat, whether a red or a green one, would best suit the physiognomy of a fortunate wooer. I grant that Nature has not given me a red and white porcelain-face like Lieutenant Papperto, and ladies whom such a one pleases must think a brown and severe one less handsome. But fortunately there are people who can like a countenance of this kind very much. I will now go to the Mullitons; Betty Mulliton is really a most lovely girl.

ANNA TO AXEL.

I congratulate you. If you have not yet decided regarding the waistcoat, I pray you to make use of the one contained in this packet, which I have em-

broidered for you, or rather have bought for you, since every stitch has cost a second of my night's rest. I think that it will be very becoming to a brown and severe countenance. My love to Betty Mulliton!

ANNA TO AXEL.

For the love of God, Axel, what has happened? You have been bled! You are ill! I also am almost ill through uneasiness. Axel, Axel, how wild and imprudent you are!

AXEL TO ANNA.

In somewhat cooler blood, and in a somewhat quieter mood, I hasten to say to you a word which vainly in my childhood they endeavoured by cudgeling to wrest from my lips;—a word, to escape which I have in later times fought a duel, and which to pronounce at thy feet, my Anna, my angel of goodness and patience, I now yearn;—PARDON, O PARDON!

ANNA TO AXEL.

The Doctor, I hear, has forbidden conversation, and has ordered you, for several days, silence and rest. Be obedient, my best Axel, and shew in this way that you love me.

Do not think about anything unpleasant. I make myself your invisible sick-nurse. I come and seat myself upon your bed, in my white dress, and with my fair curls, just as I pleased you so much lately.



You may not look at me; I draw the green curtains.  
You must sleep, and there will I sing a little cradle-song. Listen—or, rather, do not listen, but sleep!

“Young Axel is beloved by me,”  
Anna sighed, and sung this ditty,  
Thinking, “He is, what a pity!  
Eaten up by jealousy!

“If, as bridegroom, thus he can  
Be so stern, so crooked-pated,  
How, when once together mated,  
Shall we act as wife and man?

“Shall we say, all day, in strife,  
‘Wicked Axel!’ ‘truthless Anna!’  
Ah! ’twixt Axel, then, and Anna,  
What an enviable life!

“Axel, thou to me art dear;  
Yet, ere such a life be spending,  
Let our love have speedy ending;  
Trust me that far better were!”

### AXEL TO ANNA.

Axel heard fair Anna’s song;  
Would not mar its tuneful measure;  
True, to hear the song was pleasure;  
Yet it was a little long.

And thus sang he: “Should I kind,  
Should I gentle be for ever;  
Merry jesting were I never  
In my heart’s warm love to find.

“Who is it, excepting thee,  
Could from jealousy defend me,  
Ever blessed quiet lend me?  
Anna, thou must marry me!”

## ANNA TO AXEL.

Anna she heard Axel's song;  
How impertinently mutter'd,  
Scarcely can in words be utter'd;  
Hence 't will be unanswer'd long.

## AXEL TO ANNA.

Not so, good Anna; not so, but as follows :

This advice pleased Anna well;  
She follow'd it, as reason's plan,  
Became good wife to that good man,  
And, in so doing, won a deal.

## ANNA TO AXEL.

Nay, as you will. Invalids one dare not contradict. Take now and then a spoonful of this apple-jelly that I have prepared for you and sent. It will do you good.

## AXEL TO ANNA.

Anna, I am melancholy. The birds twitter outside my window, and build themselves nests under the roof. I must lie in bed—my only pleasure is to say rude things to the Doctor, and break his medicine bottles, which have no healing power in them.

## ANNA TO AXEL.

Amuse yourself rather with reading this book that I send you; there is a deal that is good and true in it. Often when I was low spirited, and in a state of

mind in which I saw every thing black, when all the strings of my soul had become inharmonious, has the reading of a good book again tuned them, and listening to their sweet, ringing harmony, I have thought:—

Now heave the foaming billows, now they fall,  
Beneath our boat upon life's stormy flood;  
Let never gloomy cowardice appal;  
Let us hope ever! God is wise and good!

Even if at times the tempest howleth o'er us,  
And gloomy night encompass us with fear,—  
One moment wait!—the tempest flies before us,  
And the still, peaceful heaven smileth clear.

And green-clad shores, enriched with many a blossom,  
Beckon the sailor o'er the peaceful flood;  
Thither he steers with thankful throbbing bosom,  
And, filled with joy, says, "God is wise, good!"

#### AXEL TO ANNA.

That is He, that is He, and you are an angel, Anna! But the spirit of melancholy has seized upon my soul as well as my body to-day. I think, or rather I beat my brains, now too much to be able to read. A wretched crowd of gloomy black fancies surrounds me in my solitude, like ghosts which have risen up from Tartarus. What will become of you with this penurious and severe aunt, who will not open her doors to young and respectable men? Shall you sit year after year with her, and, like her, dry up and become hollow-eyed (which would be nothing to wonder at, since you see only her), and catch her cough? What will become of me with this old uncle,

who makes me write out his memoirs and thoughts until my own become quite unclear? What, tell me, what?

ANNA TO AXEL.

Let us become whatever we may, only not unworthy and ungrateful creatures. Axel, you may never again speak of my aunt in this tone, she has her less amiable qualities, but she has also her good ones; and besides, I know, intends me so much good. Sooner than make her infirmities of age ridiculous, I would have them myself.

Your uncle, as you yourself have told me, has shewn you a deal of kindness.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Oh, they are both, without doubt, angels, true angels of light, who, however, let us sit in utter darkness. I am ill, and out of spirits.

ANNA TO AXEL.

I am so happy to-day. I have such good hopes. Whence and wherefore? Listen! I was yesterday in the church. The air was cold, the wind raged, my aunt would not let me go. I entreated and entreated, until the "No, my dear child!" changed itself into a "Nay, so go then, thou self-willed thing!" which sounded most harmoniously to my ear.

For whom I prayed most fervently in the church you will be able easily to guess. I prayed from the

most secret recesses of my heart, as confidently as a child may implore an All-good Father. As I, in deep devotion, rose up with the congregation to sing the heavenly hallelujah, a sunbeam, clear and wonderful, streamed through the church-window and illuminated Westin's glorious altar-piece. The angels of Faith, Hope, and Charity, who kneel around the grave of the already ascended One, stood forth at once so living, so supernaturally true, that it seemed as though they opened their lips and joined in our song of praise. In my heart arose powerful and inward conviction, that all will yet be well! and with indescribable emotion I bowed myself to receive for us both the solemn blessing. Axel, all will yet be well!

## AXEL TO ANNA.

On your account, my Anna, sweet angel, and through you, shall I become blest.

I also to-day have in my soul only joyful feelings, lovely hopes, old, good, and to me most heartily welcome acquaintance. I was up and sate at the window; I have tasted your excellent apple-jelly, and saw how the clear March sun melted the icicles which the cold night had laid upon our neighbour's copper roof. Upon this, I philosophised somewhat in this strain: as the light and warmth of heaven make the ice-veil of night to disappear, will also from thence the rays of a better fortune break through the powerful frost-mist which dims the perspective of our happiness. I gazed

so long and so full of presentiment at the sun's activity, until I at length fancied I saw clearly one of the figures which the victorious, piercing sunbeams formed in their resisting ice, the ridge and form of my own nose. Somewhat farther on, close to the side of the chimney, I recognised with delight the form of your white, softly rounded forehead, which seemed modestly desirous of withdrawing itself from the kisses of the sun. O Anna! I must shew you one of these days how lovely this looked,—I must represent the sun.

#### ANNA TO AXEL.

I assure you that I am not at all curious. You have then got up! How I rejoice about it! The most unpleasant thing may happen to me to-day (if it only does not concern you), and I shall laugh at it.

#### AXEL TO ANNA.

Ha, ha, ha, ha! Do you know at what I laugh? At myself, my angel. I have such good hopes and presentiments, that I should find it quite natural if now a good friend should suddenly step in, and say to me—"Axel, thou art become an excessively rich man." I believe also, that I should not be astonished if suddenly little Cupids should sail in at the window, bringing a poor lover a talisman, by which he could command all the gifts of fortune; neither should I open my mouth very wide, if suddenly the ceiling of my room were to open, in order to let a shower of

gold stream in! Every thing seems to me possible to-day, nothing would surprise me. I have opened my door and window to welcome my visitors; and whilst I wander smiling up and down my chamber, I now and then cast a glance up towards the ceiling.

## AXEL TO ANNA.

Curs—— draught! I beg pardon; but I am in a very bad humour. I have been obliged to close doors and windows. I became numb and stiff in all my limbs from this cold and draught. No one came. And instead of raising my looks towards the ceiling have carefully examined the floor; so that after a careful examination I can assure you that he who laid it down must have been an arch bungler, for not one deal is like another, either in height or width. I must now go out and breathe the fresh air. I am in health, and will be in health. My uncle and doctor may say what they will.

## AXEL TO ANNA.

Anna, Anna! my Anna, my Anna! good Anna, excellent Anna, angel Anna! Anna, my Anna, my bride, my wife, sing, spring, shout Victoria!

## ANNA TO AXEL.

Axel, Axel, incomprehensible Axel! what is the matter with thee? What has happened?

## AXEL TO ANNA.

I have an office—I have an office! He came, the excellent friend through the door,—the angel from heaven. I had almost knocked him down as I went out. O what a friend! He it is who has resigned to me the situation with its accompanying salary, which has been offered to him, because he had no need of it. He is rich, he has made me also rich. Oh, shew me a mortal who is happier than I! A lover whose—yet still perhaps—if he were already married. But that also in a short time I will become—if you will, my Anna—Anna!

## ANNA TO AXEL.

Good Axel, is it possible? Is it then really true? I can scarcely believe it—I cannot take it in. Axel, my dear friend, shall we really become happy?

## AXEL TO ANNA.

We shall. My whole life shall be consecrated to your happiness; and your happiness will always, as now, be mine. We can now marry when it is agreeable to us. I have a respectable situation; the salary is certainly not large, but our wants will be small. The comfortable things of life are mostly only for old people, who are no longer able to enjoy the happiness of the heart,—when one can no longer love and be beloved. Nay, why then it may, perhaps, be the best to sleep and dream on a soft couch, that one



is happy. We, my Anna, who may pluck in the May of life its most beautiful flowers, we will waking enjoy our felicity, and be happy, even were we poor; yes, even were we obliged to do without every thing. Do you remember with what emotion we once read near Medevi, of that married pair, who, after living together five-and-twenty years, felt themselves so unspeakably happy? O my Anna, do you yet remember this?

## ANNA TO AXEL.

In truth, my best Axel——no.

## AXEL TO ANNA.

Accompanied by a friend, Mr. L—— and his wife wandered through a wood. Here they encountered some gipsies, who were in great misery. L——'s friend pitied these poor creatures, who are exposed to all the physical calamities of nature. "Well," said Mr. L——, "if in order to pass my life with her (his wife), I must have subjected myself to a condition such as this, I would have gone about begging these thirty years—and we should still have been very happy!"

"Ah, yes!" cried his wife; "even *then* we should have been the happiest of human beings."

What words, my Anna, what words! They were spoken under England's heaven. Let us become worthy to speak them, one day, under Sweden's heaven.

## ANNA TO AXEL.

For heaven's sake, best Axel. You do not mean? I do not rightly understand at what you aim. Yet I must confess to you, that to me, suffering, hunger, shivering, and begging, appear less attractive. What do you really mean? A gipsy I will never become; that I tell you, were it only on account of the frightful complexion.

## AXEL TO ANNA.

That is not necessary. Nothing shall prevent my wife being white, as well in her complexion as her clothes.

O my beloved Anna, do not overthrow my temple of happiness with your cold, calculating, worldly, and trifling spirit. Let us become happy, not for others, but for ourselves. If you desire this, we certainly can. My salary certainly is small, as I have already said—a nothing in comparison to that which I should wish to offer you. Three hundred dollars is our yearly income. That is truly little, very little; but your prudent housekeeping, my economy and order, will make every penny a dollar. A man requires really so little, only to live—life is really so short. Who has not much, has not much to care about.

With but little ballast, the jolly-boat sails so lightly and merrily on, now over rising, and now over sinking waves. Let us courageously step in;

—the wind is favourable—the shores adorned with flowers—the heaven free from clouds—and before us wanders the mild star of love, which lights us as far as the haven. I am now too much excited; later, I will unfold to you my plans.

## ANNA TO AXEL.

My good Axel, zephyrs seldom blow on the ocean of life—there very wild storms toss about. I fear very much that, at the first gust of wind, the jolly-boat, without ballast, might be upset.

## AXEL TO ANNA.

If one is fearful and cowardly—yes,—if one loses one's equilibrium in the slightest gust of wind. But away with similes! They only confuse; I will dash straight into the affair.

I possess (as you know) a small farm near the city. This is small, quite small, and scarcely worth three hundred dollars, but still one could live very well there. A roof over their heads was all that our forefathers desired when they built their huts. And what a hardy, glorious people were they! We are less, and we have more. Two rooms and a kitchen has our little temple of happiness, a blooming potatoe-field surrounds it, and a garden, where the most beautiful fruit-trees and the most lovely flowers can come forth, changes the whole place into a real para-

dise. A little hen-house. Anna, I will not pardon you, if you should laugh.

ANNA TO AXEL.

I truly do not laugh, my best Axel.

AXEL TO ANNA.

A little hen-house, I would say, stands close by, and its pretty inhabitants will afford us profit and pleasure.

With regard to the fitting up of the interior—away with the luxury and cursed superfluity which has made my fatherland poor! Away with the false ideas of what is becoming, proper, respectable; despicable prejudices which only repeat, one should do as others do, away with you! To you I turn, simple manners, honour of the olden time. Temperance and contentment, the doctrine of our forefathers, be welcome and rule in my quiet house. A wooden bench appears soft when one is seated upon it at the beloved one's side; a bowl of milk, one simple dish placed by your hand upon the table, at which a friend, a friend who knows how to prize what is offered by sincere hearts, will not refuse to take his place—O what a meal! Kings, emperors, invite me into your golden halls! Proud and disdainfully will Anna's happy husband answer, No. O my sweet Anna, how quickly, how joyously, must our days pass away in this little earthly paradise! Hand in hand we wander through life,

and die at length so sweetly in each other's arms! But pardon, I will not distress you—do not weep, my Anna!

## ANNA TO AXEL.

I will certainly not weep, my best Axel!

## AXEL TO ANNA.

Our clothes shall be simple, like our food, like our whole life. You must be always clothed in *white*, for then you are like an angel. The garden I attend to myself, dig, weed, plant, and water, with your assistance, on the days I am not occupied in the city. In the house, disposes and commands, with absolute sway, my ever industrious and circumspect little wife. When I return from my labour in the fields, or out of the city, your harp and your voice will transport me into heaven, or we eat together a simple meal which is savoured by our appetite and gaiety. For the evenings, when the great world with yawns seeks for pleasure where it never yet was found, at suppers, where one goes through a course of moral hungering, or at balls, where one dances as though for wages—in the evenings we read together, Tegnér's poems, Cooper's and Walter Scott's romances, and enjoy, whilst we ennoble our hearts, all the pleasure which genius can afford the soul and the heart. We must not neglect the theatre; in order to see Almlóf plays, we must rather neglect eating and drinking. Thus

we are very often there. But you must have a maid-servant, that is true, for you must not burn your face and hands at the hearth. Besides, when I am at home, you must be always near me. O Anna, say, shall we not be unspeakably happy?

ANNA TO AXEL.

I hope so, certainly, my dear friend; but whether precisely in the manner which you have imagined to yourself I know not, I fear that you are precisely the one who is not fitted for such a simple shepherd's life; besides, this is put together in a strange enough manner. Do you yet know, what you once told me, how much pocket-money your uncle gave you yearly?

AXEL TO ANNA.

The dev—— (I do not curse). I now remember. Full three hundred dollars—exactly as much as my future salary amounts to,—and this was, by the end of the year, entirely gone. But, angel Anna, when I am once married, you shall see something quite different; then I will become supernaturally economical; I will look at every heller.

ANNA TO AXEL.

Very pleasant for your wife! Willingly, best Axel, will I also look at every heller, and be as economical as possible; but with all this, I fear that, if we follow your plans, we shall become ever and ever

more like the gipsy pair. Have you considered that you drink three cups of coffee every morning? And when you were with us one evening, I saw that to three cups of tea you did not despise quite a profuse supply of tea-bread and rusks.

AXEL TO ANNA.

From this day forth, I will eat oatmeal-soup every morning and every evening, drink egg-beer, and soak brown bread in it, if you think the other too dear. You are right. Besides, as a patriot, one must renounce all articles which are not brought forth from the earth of our fatherland.

Agreed, Anna; we eat for a year, from this month forth, every morning, a dish of oatmeal-soup—every evening a cup of egg-beer, in our own little paradise. Besides, this is far more advantageous for the complexion and health than all the cursed tea and coffee drinking. And should it taste even like Peruvian-bark and rhubarb—

When Hebe Anna fills the cup,  
Axel, as nectar, will drink it up.

ANNA TO AXEL.

Oatmeal-soup I can only get down with trouble; and egg-beer is, once for all, very disagreeable to me.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Who fears to share with me a dish of oatmeal-soup

despises surely (and this I have observed well from the beginning) the little which I have besides to offer—my heart, my hand. It is true this is very little. The fool! who could be so bold and believe—but I begin to see my errors.

#### ANNA TO AXEL.

If I do not exactly fancy to eat oatmeal-soup and egg-beer, that does not prevent me, morning and evening, from being able to satisfy myself with a little cold milk instead of coffee and tea. Yes, a cup of cold milk and a morsel of brown bread will taste excellently. This is all that I need.

#### ANNA TO AXEL.

The little pretty house and the garden (which is to be some time) I find exceedingly agreeable; yet you have, in your tender partiality, conferred upon me a very extensive power of operation. I examine with trembling all the duties which will be imposed upon me in the future; always to be clothed in white, and to dig in the garden,—to put in order, to sweep, spin, weave, cook in company with a maid,—to play upon the harp and to sing,—to care for every thing in the house, and to be constantly with you when you are at home (which we will hope will be the greater part of the day),—to feed the fowls, to drive to the theatre, read romances with you,—with one word, represent six or seven personages at once. My good Axel,



you will truly be forced to have, in future, some forbearance, like many others who demand too much from their wives.

ANNA TO AXEL.

[*A day later.*

I fear you are piqued, Axel; but this time, my friend, you are certainly somewhat in the wrong. To share in life, sorrow and joy with you, is, as you know, my most intense desire. Only on your account I wish that joy might preponderate; but your picture of the future gives me little hope of this. You look through a burnt yellow-coloured glass, which shews you the object neither clear nor true. I shall always tell you the truth, Axel.

ANNA TO AXEL.

[*A day later.*

Meanwhile, were it a possibility, and did your uncle and my aunt give their consent, I would certainly not say no. We are really so young, and can work. Only we must strike out of your account this ever-white dress, the music, the play, and the very agreeable and beneficial reading, which, however, in such narrow circumstances, would steal away too much time.

ANNA TO AXEL.

Oatmeal-soup tastes really not so bad, and egg-beer I drank fresh last evening. It does not taste exactly good; but perhaps it agrees with one well.

## AXEL TO ANNA.

My angel, good Anna, you shall never either eat or do the least possible thing for which you have not a decided inclination. I should deserve to be condemned to bread and water, if I desired anything else. Do you see, heavenly maiden, that it was not after all, such pure earnest with the wooden bench, the single dish, and the one servant-maid. I have, do you see, speculated upon my uncle. He will certainly for decency's sake, when we help ourselves so excellently, assist us a little. My uncle is very far from being hard-hearted, and besides he is very fond of me, that I know.

## ANNA TO AXEL.

My aunt is also sometimes very good, and loves me tenderly in her way I know; she has given me many proofs of this. Possibly she would also do something for us.

## AXEL TO ANNA.

Anna, we will speak with our dear relatives,—shall we not? We will tell them every thing. Should they say no—Anna, I have your word,—you are already mine before God—and mine you remain, men will not separate us! Yet we must endeavour to move human beings to be human.

ANNA TO AXEL.

Yes, Axel, let us endeavour to soften the hearts of those against whose wishes and commands we neither may nor should act. Yes, let us try this.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Well, to-morrow !

ANNA TO AXEL.

To-morrow!

AXEL TO ANNA.

*[A day later.]*

My dear uncle is somewhat cross this morning. The coffee was cold, and the news in the papers was not according to his mind. "The rulers behave stupidly," said he. "I shall take care not to do the same, I must still wait some hours."

ANNA TO AXEL.

My dear aunt is also in an ill-humour. She has mislaid a piece of money, and broken a bottle of rose-water; but one would believe *I* had done it. Before three hours, at least, I dare say nothing.

AXEL TO ANNA.

The whole forenoon my uncle has thundered politics. Russia and the whole Ottoman empire have alternately come upon the carpet. I have listened

with the most unwearying patience, and said, "Yes," "No," "all the better, dear uncle," or, "all the worse, dear uncle," just as was in accordance with the old man's ideas. What did this help? He became ever more and more jealous; he turned towards me, seemed to perceive in my person a representative of the Turkish empire, fell in a rage, so that I, in order not to receive blows, like the Sublime Porte, was obliged, in all haste, to make my retreat through the door. I am quite vexed about the lost forenoon.

## ANNA TO AXEL.

Five times this forenoon have I opened my mouth to begin my little speech, and five times have I again closed it. To have prayed for anything would certainly have been fruitless. For my aunt sitting there in the corner of her sofa, with closely pressed together lips and severe looks, appeared a living, No! But this afternoon!

## AXEL TO ANNA.

The old man is now fast, he shall not again escape. He is taking his afternoon nap. I will take great care that he neither goes out, nor that any one comes in to him, before I have been able to say: "I love Anna; I must have her for my wife, or die!"

## ANNA TO AXEL.

Axel, how my heart beats! My aunt also is taking

her afternoon rest! When she wakes I will speak with her. If she is only not too soon wakened for them, her temper is not good—still Manette! Do not mew so, there is the cream for my coffee; lap and be quiet. Ah! there buzzes a big fly—it will seat itself, perhaps, upon her nose—no—my good angel, send it away! Good, she sleeps quietly. But yet she will wake some time—and I shall speak. I tremble whilst I write.

Axel, how my heart beats! I hear it throb! It is painful! Art thou also in the same state of mind, Axel?

## AXEL TO ANNA.

My heart beats, certainly, quicker and more powerfully than the pendulum of a clock; but I wish, did it pain me ever so much, that it would beat as roughly as a coppersmith's hammer, so that my excellent uncle, who entirely and wholly to pain and annoy me keeps sleeping on, might be awakened by it. Nothing is so unbearable as to wait, to live in uncertainty—to hold oneself ready. I have coughed, sung, made a noise before his door,—all in vain! As often as I listened, I have had the vexation of hearing him snore. Had he not locked himself in, one could have entered easily, blundered over the sofa, or found out some other polite manner of waking the sleeper. But now it is enough to drive one mad. I have the

desire to set my curtains on fire, only to bring the fire drum past his windows.

ANNA TO AXEL.

Do not be nonsensical, Axel, commit no folly. My aunt sleeps also, or pretends to do so; for as often as I have gone over to her and have looked at her, I have seen her opened eyes hastily close themselves. Most certainly she has remarked that I await her waking to say something to her. Does thy uncle still sleep?

AXEL TO ANNA.

Ever and eternally. His long deep breathing draws away the air from me at the same time; it is just as though I found myself in a cellar-vault. Does thy aunt still pretend to be sleeping?

ANNA TO AXEL.

Still. What shall I do?

AXEL TO ANNA.

Vexation! Now he has awoke, and has stolen forth like a mouse which is afraid of the cat. I heard a slight rustle at his door. When I rushed out to see what this was, I heard, quite down below on the stairs, a clip-clap of galosches, which in all haste hurried out of the door. I ran after him, and cried,

“Uncle! uncle! I have something to say to you!”  
 “To-morrow is also a day!” he answered, without looking back. I am in despair. He has remarked something.

ANNA TO AXEL.

Ah, Axel! my aunt has feigned sleep until now. It is now late in the evening, the worst time of the day to make confessions to her. Let it then remain as thy uncle said, “To-morrow!” Ah, it seems to me as though I had gained something by this delay.

AXEL TO ANNA.

A day of fruitless, painful waiting,—a sleepless night. See, this is my whole gain! But to-morrow!

AXEL TO ANNA.

*[At midnight.*

I cannot sleep. Anna, I have dark forebodings—the morrow will bring us no good. I have now no inconsiderable sum of money in my hands. I have sold something. But, however, what has that to do with the affair? Anna, would it—if our—but it will be best to speak about this when fate has decided.

I believe, my best Anna, the midnight hour shews me ghosts. Anna, I feel deeply, that if you do not wander by my side, my whole life will be only a ghost,—that is, a horrible nothing!

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The clock strikes one, Anna. This stroke is our symbol—we also are only one. In the morning hour of life we have united ourselves,—I know that nothing can separate us. Wherefore, then, do I write so seriously? Wherefore am I in such a gloomy mood?

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How slowly pass away the hours of the night! Thinking of you, and writing to you, I endeavour to give wings to the minutes. Now, when every thing around me is so still and peaceful, I hear all the more distinctly the storm within me—I cannot conceive how all can be so still, so silent, so dead. Is not this the world—are not human beings here—do not passions wake in their bosoms? Do I live solitary, and have all the spirits of disquiet which fled from reposing hearts assembled themselves in my breast? My gentle Anna, I feel it is a stormy ocean into which your gentle soul will discharge itself. But then will all attain rest!

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I have sought after peace—in vain. Separated from you, I shall find it no more. The winged throbbing of the heart—and every throb a sentiment—how the minutes stretch themselves out into eternity! And every thing around me is so peaceful. Listen! the town-clock strikes two—will nothing then awake? Will no pain, no love, no yearning, raise its voice through the night? All is still—I alone



wake—yet there calls the watchman; but how carelessly he announces to the world that the judgment comes!

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It is morning. The world awakes—I am no longer so solitary. It is day also in my soul,—I am peaceful. The hour is here. It means—now!

## ANNA TO AXEL.

I have received what you have written to me last night. Axel, could you believe that you alone were awake? Did you not hear the beating of my heart? O how extraordinary, that a mixture of wood, moss, and lime, which is for you a floor and for me a ceiling, should prevent two human hearts from understanding each other! Ah, were this *now* only somewhat farther off—I tremble!

## AXEL TO ANNA.

Still I have hope, beloved, adored Anna; still nothing is lost. This morning, whilst my uncle drank his coffee, I took courage, prayed to God; thought, Anna! drew breath, and went in to him. “My best uncle!” I commenced quietly and solemnly—“My best nephew,” answered he, “what shall ‘my best uncle’ do?” “Your goodness—”—“Now, what then—my goodness?” “I wish—I have.”—“I wish—I have—nay that was really excellent!” (The old man has always had an extremely unpleasant manner

of repeating my words, and then they always sound as stupid again). “Dear uncle—I am in love!” “In love? Yes, that I have easily remarked in the jaundiced complexion which thou hast had this half-year past—this is the colour of love.” “My uncle, the weal or woe of my whole life depends upon one single word. O my best uncle, who——” Now came a man, whom I wished at the witch’s mountain, with the papers into the room. “My son,” said my uncle, “come again in a few hours—then we can speak farther with each other. Now I must see how affairs stand between Turkey and Russia.” I was precisely not in the mood to wait. I took the papers, stuck them in my pocket, and said in a firm tone, “First, uncle, you must hear me.” He stuck his fingers in his ears, fixed his eyes upon me like two claws, and cried, “Not one word, not a breath! Give me the papers this moment, or I will never listen to thee again.” I cried, and cried again still louder. At length I must, like a little west-wind, give way to the storm of the north. My uncle became again kind, and I went my way; for he would neither have heard nor understood me, as he had fixed his eyes upon his dear papers. An hour will soon have past; yet another, and then I go. O my Anna, my only one!

#### AXEL TO ANNA.

Turks and Russians, Russians and Turks, what are they and their interests to me?—Straw—paper-

cuttings; and on their account must I sit here, as in a fiery furnace. Ah!—now, Anna!

AXEL TO ANNA.

It is past!—All is lost—not a spark of hope remains—I cannot see what I write.

ANNA TO AXEL.

And for me also—I received a round No—and in such hard terms! O Axel! now I feel for the first time how unspeakably I love you!

AXEL TO ANNA.

To humble me! To threaten me! “Ridiculous—nonsensical!” To threaten to turn me out of doors—me—yes, people don’t know me!

ANNA TO AXEL.

My aunt will marry me in a short time—but not to you. “This man,” said she, “has his own house, his own equipage, and is besides a respectable man.”—I was forced to laugh, Axel. I have said to her—thou, or no one!

AXEL TO ANNA.

Anna, let us fly! Let us escape from these tyrants who will murder our happiness! The earth is large, a little corner upon it can certainly be found for us. All human beings are not barbarians. You are mine. I conjure you, I command you, to follow me. To-morrow, more about this. Hold yourself ready. My determination is irresistible. We fly!

## ANNA TO AXEL.

Axel, no! This would be wrong. Axel, reflect. Axel, my friend, my beloved, calm yourself, for my sake!

## AXEL TO ANNA.

Place yourself this evening, between ten and eleven, at the door which leads into the neighbouring lane. Be quiet. All is ready, I have money. You are under my protection; you go with ME; your duty is only to follow me. Between ten and eleven.

## ANNA TO AXEL.

No, Axel! It is wrong, it is unwise. We sin against the laws of God and man in order to plunge ourselves in misery. I love you above every thing; but I need not, and will not, follow you when you do not remain upon the good and right path. And were there no other obstacle, this is sufficient for me. My aunt is sickly and old, she has only me. I will not leave her thus. Axel, come to reflection—I pray, I beseech you!

## AXEL TO ANNA.

It is then you, you who will not—who refuse, who break—you, whom I believed mine! Anna, Anna, will you deceive me or yourself? That rich, that estimable man—is it not on his account that you despise me and my poverty? Is he not at this

moment with you — he — this man — this detested Emil? Answer, Anna!

ANNA TO AXEL.

I cannot answer to such a question. Axel, I love, I pity you. Axel, be the man who is worthy to be every thing to a woman. Be strong for her sake, be pure in thoughts as in wishes. O Axel, my only, my beloved friend, be my support, be a model to me in this difficult hour. Set me an example of submission, not to a stern and blind fate, but to the ordination of an All-wise Father, under whose support we always wander, let things be calm or desperate as they may. Have patience; we are yet indeed so young; let us wait; let us be patient; every thing may yet turn to good.

AXEL TO ANNA.

You are very calm, very discreet, very patient, quite satisfied. I understand you—Anna, Anna!

ANNA TO AXEL.

What shall I say to calm you, to make you satisfied? I love you indescribably, Axel; but for that very reason will I be worthy of you. Does a woman, indeed, ever preserve the esteem of a lover, who submits blindly to his passion.

Imagine, Axel, that you are some years older than you are (that can appear natural enough when one

is unhappy and in suffering, the minutes are then long, and bring experiences as if they were years); imagine that I am your daughter, what would you now say to me? Would you not speak to me admonishingly. Destroy not for the petty felicity of one moment the whole life's happiness of yourself and your friend. Be calm, wait for the time, that is often the only thing, and the most prudent thing, which a person can do. He whom you love so inwardly, so inexpressibly, will sometime do justice to her who would rather suffer for him, through him, than pollute a heart which is consecrated to him and virtue, by an impure thought, an action—a crime against duty.

#### ANNA TO AXEL.

Not a word from you? My Axel! can you really be dissatisfied with me? Yes, Axel, I am calm—because I am resigned,—but happy? ah, that is past!

Will you not say one kind word to me? I need it so much.

#### ANNA TO AXEL.

Axel, Axel, what wild demons must now be raging in your soul! Axel, pray! Do you know at whose word the agitated waves of the sea became calm? “And it was still.” Pray to Him!

#### ANNA TO AXEL.

O heavens! I am uneasy beyond all description!

Axel, could I only see you for a few minutes! How unhappy you must be! Axel, how culpable you are if you despair, if you for one moment could forget, would forget, that Anna loves you.

## ANNA TO AXEL.

Do you know, Axel, what a woman's love means? Do you know that which she says in the words—*I love thee*? Listen, Axel! Your life is mine; your virtue, my honour; your sorrow, your joy, are mine; your strength, my support; your courage, my hope,—but your fall, your disgrace—my death!

## ANNA TO AXEL.

Axel—Axel—I know it, you have not come home for three nights. I have listened; your foot during these has never trodden that chamber. I saw you yesterday evening from the window; your look was wild; your whole being disturbed, your gait uncertain. Where do you go, Axel? O do not turn from me! Only upon the path of duty and of patience can you find Anna. Axel, Axel, turn back!

## ANNA TO AXEL.

Axel, turn back! I cannot, I will not lose you! Listen to me! See, I weep, the tears wet the paper; see these tears—they dim my eyes,—my Axel, turn back!

## ANNA TO AXEL.

I will cast no reproaches on you,—fear not one word, which you would not hear, not one look which you would not wish to see. I am really your friend, your bride—shall be perhaps sometime your wife—Axel, think on that—sometime your wife!

## AXEL TO ANNA.

Never—never—never!

## ANNA TO AXEL.

On your breast will I lean and pray—for my sake—forgive yourself! Let you have done whatever you may—my Axel—I still love you! Yours I am, yours I remain to be!

## AXEL TO ANNA.

Never—never more! I am unworthy of you, Anna! I have forgotten—forgotten all,—you—myself—God! I have *gambled*!—Ha, the tempter, the treacherous friend! I have lost every thing which I possess,—still more than I possess—the property of others. I must fly my country. Do not lean on my breast—a hell is there,—do not seize my hand—it is bloody. Farewell! Die, poor maiden, if you can. I—cannot die!

## AXEL TO ANNA.

I had hardened myself against all your love, against



all your tenderness,—had left your letters unopened. Now I have opened them—in order to allow some fire-drops yet to run on the burning glow of my despair,—in order, if possible, to become insane. It became otherwise;—now the loving words throng beneficially about my soul, like the evening dew upon the hard parched earth.

Anna, you shall not despair on my account—I myself will not despair. I have erred grievously—I will suffer, and be reconciled. What caused my error? I know not—despair—jealousy—hell!

#### AXEL TO ANNA.

You will not say a word to me! But, indeed, am I worthy of it? Can, indeed, the pure angel of heaven speak to the son of crime?

To-morrow evening I shall set off. A letter will inform my uncle of every thing. He will not refuse his forgiveness to his unhappy nephew who has fled his country. *Forgiveness!*—that is the highest for which I can now hope. *Forgiveness!* what a word;—how blessed, to those who are forgiven! I beseech my uncle to disinherit me, and thereby to pay my debts. I fear that he will not do the latter. Anna—in my madness I borrowed a considerable sum from a friend, who is not rich, and has a wife and several little children. He loved me, he trusted me, he gave me all which he possessed; I deceived him—I gambled away his little children's clothes and food.

Now, would that I could pay him with my blood! Remorse, thou who with tiger-claws rendest my heart, what good do'st thou do him ——?

## AXEL TO ANNA.

I have erred grievously — have deserved heavy punishment. I will accuse myself before you—I must do it. I knew that I sinned, and sinned nevertheless. It is past, peace is gone—the time is gone when I knew not remorse. In my rage for my losses, I challenged my fortunate opponent. I wounded him dangerously —almost mortally. He was carried home to his mother—to his old mother! He was her darling—her only child,—perhaps she may die,—well for her!

## ANNA TO AXEL.

Axel, pray! Let us pray!

## AXEL TO ANNA.

I cannot—cannot *now*. I see him—them—the hungry little ones—their deceived father. O what am I become!

Now I am rather better. Pray for me, Anna! I believe in the power of intercession. I am not worthy to pray. You are pure and good.

This next night I shall set off! I shall go towards Germany—towards North Germany. I shall offer myself for a situation; something may turn up for me to do.

## AXEL TO ANNA.

My eyes burn—sleep flies them—that is no wonder. If I could only weep! but that is too good for me. I have something upon my heart which burdens, which gnaws it—that is the pang of conscience. Anna, if you would lay your hand upon my breast—but am I really worthy to have this alleviation.

## ANNA TO AXEL.

Here, Axel, take these opium-drops, they will give you rest and sleep. Anna prays for you; Anna weeps for you; Anna loves you.

## AXEL TO ANNA.

I have also a little sister—a suffering child—my father prayed me, upon his deathbed, to take care of her. I add her address; when you can go to her—tell her, that her poor brother—tell her, that he is dead. The ring which I enclose will, if it be sold, suffice for some months to pay for her board. When I can, I will send her more, but through you. Thanks, affectionate, good angel, for that which you have sent up. To-night—in a few hours—I shall set off—away from you!

## AXEL TO ANNA.

In two hours I shall set off. Clothes which I have sold have obtained money for my journey.

Anna, you have been my guardian-angel. I also have now been able to pray,—I am quiet, resigned—I will suffer and conciliate; I will again have hopes of myself. You have not given me up, God will forgive me. I will live, that I may become worthy of this.

I must now take leave of you—of you, that is to say, of happiness—and of every thing which makes life dear to me. But it is all my own fault. In this solemn moment, when I am about to take a long, perhaps an eternal farewell of you, I will lay open my whole soul before you. What I say to you is the truth, it will be a comfort to you, and will preserve your peace at a time when Axel will be so far removed from you.

I believe on God, the Merciful, All-wise, and Omnipresent. I am a Christian, according to my belief; that my future actions may testify to this belief, let us both pray—to Him who gives the power!

I believe that you, my Anna, love me,—and that, wherever my restless existence may be cast upon the earth, one heart will feel with me, one thought will follow me. The sweet consciousness of the steady presence of an angel!

This firm belief will sustainingly unite itself in my heart with the remembrance of my transgression—my crimes—will steel it against temptations, and will form out of me that improved person whom Anna could love.

## AXEL TO ANNA.

[*Half an hour later.*

I have not yet besought you to forgive me, and yet have done you so much wrong. Axel, weak and violent, was not worthy of you, Anna. Pardon him, however; in *one thing* he was strong—in his love—and this will endure in his breast to his last breath. Forgive him all your tears—see, mine flow,—welcome, you companions of misfortune, bathe her feet! Tears of repentance, of love, of pain, and of joy—flow, flow; that which ye can win, is forgiveness!

Your lock of hair—may I keep it? I will bear it upon my heart; and a stranger, wandering solitarily about the world, I shall still have something with me that will speak to me of the angel who was mine.

*Was* mine—is mine no longer! I have still one word to say—my last word—ah, a heavy word! Anna, you are free! I have no longer a right over your hand.

Axel's honour is stained, Anna is free! I return your ring.

Now all is at an end!

[*Eleven o'clock.*

The hour is come. I have stood at the window and contemplated the heavens. The stars sparkle brightly—brightly as on that evening,—you still remember it? when we exchanged rings, looked up to heaven, and were blessed as angels. The evening

star shone then upon us mildly and clearly. Now and then, Anna, when mournful memories of departed hours may not be unwelcome to you, then glance upward to this star, and think on Axel. Often in lonely nights will his glance in joy and sorrow be riveted upon it.

The minutes speed on. God bless you, my Anna, may his angels defend thee!

Sweden shall, please God, one day see again a worthier son.

O my country! may I in the bosom of thy earth, which bore my cradle, find my grave, which Anna will wet with a tear.

My youth, my joy, my country, my Anna—ah! all, all—farewell!

#### ANNA TO AXEL.

Axel, best Axel, do not set off to-night! Do not set off to-night, upon my knees I pray this from you. Remain yet one day,—on the following night you may set off, if in the mean time things do not change—I—ah, I dare not give you hopes, which may be easily deceived; but perhaps, O Axel, perhaps we may find means to pay your debts. Delay only this one day, Anna prays you.

#### AXEL TO ANNA.

Why delay?—that for which you hope is an impossibility,—ah, you know not what it is to delay when

every thing so——it is as if in the death-struggle one would defer the end. And why? for an impossibility! Yet once more these painful feelings—yet once more to take leave!! But you wish it!

## AXEL TO ANNA.

Why do you not write? The hours creep on so slowly. I suffer grievously, but the thought that you have willed it does me good.

## AXEL TO ANNA.

Not a word from you! What can it mean? It is already evening—a portentous and stormy evening—Anna, in my heart it is still more portentous. Write a pacifying word to me.

## AXEL TO ANNA.

My soul is so unhappy—so irritable,—I have suffered so much, I suffer still infinitely. All wild tormenting spirits are still so near to me; O fear to provoke them! Anna, say one word to me!

## AXEL TO ANNA.

And yet I *will*, I *must*, seek for peace with you. You cannot deceive me. Yes, I feel it,—you might murder me—I would kiss the dagger and still believe on you.

## AXEL TO ANNA.

Lieutenant Papperto is with you! How can he go so often, when I find it impossible to obtain an entrance—and at the same time so late? Why is he with you? Is it he who will pay my debts; or, perhaps you and he together? I am really extremely affected!

## AXEL TO ANNA.

Anna, I confide in you—yes, I confide in you,—although—but I am unhappy, in despair,—tell me what you do, what you wish?

## AXEL TO ANNA.

I have been told, that Lieutenant Papperto has resigned in your favour a considerable property which had been left to you in common by a near relation—a relation, heaven knows who it was; for my part, God himself be with us! I have been told that you embraced Lieutenant Papperto—in his arms, on his bosom, have wept. I have been told that you are betrothed. A busy friend has hastened to gladden me with these tidings. Is it true, Anna? Death and the devil, is it true?

## AXEL TO ANNA.

Anna, if you are thus—if you have thus forsaken me—yourself—what will become of me, Anna? In whom shall I still believe?



## AXEL TO ANNA.

Your silence is an answer. Then it is true. Ha, woman, woman! Snake, monster! O where can I find the true expression? Where can I get words to describe my feelings? Detestable payment of my debts! Payment with the selling of a soul. Ha, ha, ha, ha!—Do you understand me? I write down my laughter—ha, ha, ha! Thus I shall set off on my journey, rich in sad experience. It is now night—the hour is come—hurrah! Welcome storm-wind, which salutes my forehead as a brother, and dances upon my nocturnal way. Yes, nocturnal, nocturnal! Farewell, Anna, I leave you my cur——. I pity you!

## ANNA TO AXEL.

Axel, Axel, stay! Ah, forgive! I could not write earlier. The brightest light suddenly in the deepest darkness—that would be too much—I could not bear it. Emil is a noble man—I have embraced him—but for your sake. I can now no more. I am thine, Axel, thine!

## ANNA TO AXEL.

I am very ill. Oh, I never thought that happiness could be so oppressive—I am not able to bear it. Axel, we are rich! Lieutenant Papperto will unite us, will move our relations. L——, whom you wounded, will not die. Your debts will be paid,—all

will be good. Poor Axel, how I have pitied you! Forgive me all your disquiet, your despair. I was not in a state to give you an explanation, such as you ought to have had, and as you desired.

## ANNA TO AXEL.

[*A day later.*

My illness increases, but I am perfectly conscious. I draw together my bed-curtains, say that I will sleep, but write to you. I fear, however, that it will be illegible. If I die, then I can and will leave my property to you. With one part of it, pay your debts; with the rest, seek to make yourself, and others, happy; but never play, Axel, never more!

## ANNA TO AXEL.

[*A day later.*

Prepare yourself for all, my friend; I have, perhaps, only one day longer to live. Axel, do not give yourself up to despair. I will never leave you. You will not wander lonesome through the world, whether you meet with joy or sorrow; your Anna will invisibly attend you, true as when she yet wore your ring, as a child of heaven, still the bride of her Axel. Ought, indeed, two souls, which have once found each other, ever to become separated by anything? Should two flames, which have united, part and burn each for itself? O no! my spirit will float around you—be near to you—attend you ever. You will

feel it near to you, delicious as a breath of spring, or as the fragrance of flowers—or as a caress, a kiss, pure and gentle as a moonbeam. When you feel yourself good, strong; or when you feel yourself happy, consoled, or full of hope, or only calm,—then think that your Anna is near you.

## ANNA TO AXEL.

Now, for the first time, now I understand that glorious apparition which so affected me. The angels of faith, of love, and of hope, beside a grave, illumined by the glorious sun of God. It has reference to you, my Axel. From the quiet grave, where Anna will soon repose, will these three shew you the way home, where she awaits you.

## ANNA TO AXEL.

My consciousness begins to be confused. Yet a few words to you, my Axel, although I do not know whether I have not already written them. My property I have left to you. I could do so according to law and right. With one part thereof, you must pay your debts ——

My Axel, do not gamble again. With the remainder, you must make yourself and others happy. If you marry, be a good husband.

Not violent ——

Not jealous ——

Not a gambler ——

A wife suffers much from these failings. It is wrong and cruel to distress her who looks for her entire happiness from you.

Be good to the poor.

Be unjust to no one. Fight no duel.

Blood demands blood. Fear God.

Think on Anna!

#### AXEL TO ANNA.

That which I shall now do I tell you beforehand, that you may be prepared for it, and not be shocked. I shall come down to you—knock down the drawing-room door—knock down all the doors, if they are locked—knock everybody down, or dead, who will keep me back—go in, and seat myself near you, that I may, with the strength of a despair which will compel fate to my side and conquer death itself, retain your angel soul in your angel body. I follow these lines.

#### AXEL TO ANNA.

*[Three days later.]*

I came to you, Anna, wild, in nameless despair—saw you—was calm, and learned to pray. I saw you almost about to leave me, and to depart to a better home, which is so well known to you, but from which I was excluded,—and was able again to pray. You are again given to me—to earth and to me. And now, angel of heaven, teach me to pray—and to give thanks.

## AXEL TO ANNA.

[*A day later.*

They will not allow me to be with you; you require rest, they say. Yes, my Anna, I confess that my nature has no resemblance to the west wind; but it shall ever more and more acquire it. Your last letter, my Anna, shall always rest on my heart; like a talisman, it shall there operate against all that is evil, and for all that is good. I have embraced Emil as my benefactor and friend. We have been together to-day, to L——, my opponent, and the sacrifice of my fury. He is out of all danger. I turned myself to his mother with the difficult word *pardon* (which, alas, is now become customary to me), and, with a shake of the hand, L—— and I have promised never to play again.

## AXEL TO ANNA.

Through the care of the noble-minded Emil are my debts already paid. Oh, I am not worthy of my happiness! It weighs upon me,—it almost weighs me down. If I for one year were a Trappist, were to wear a hair shirt, were to scourge myself a little every day, to lie upon nails, to go about silently and with eyes cast down, not to see the sun, and to dig my own grave,—then I fancy I should gain a little more courage to become happy.

I said this also in the fulness of my heart to Emil.

He laughed, and asked whether, as the beginning of my designed penance, I would not impose upon myself the not seeing Anna again for a month's time. It would be just as good to bury me at once! Anna, you are my life, my all. The austerity of the Trappist life is nothing, all physical martyrdom is mere child's play; but not to see you—see, that is martyrdom, that is death!

## AXEL TO ANNA.

I would that I could with my breath suck up the time, and thereby bring on the quicker the moment when I may again see you; and yet I enjoy drop by drop this time, of which every minute conveys to you more power of life, more strength. Fear not my presence, my dear Anna; I will be quiet, calm, immoveable as your clock, if I might only reckon the hours by it near to you. I want to see what they give you, and how they nurse you. Do not take any more medicine; it does no good when people are getting better, excepting that it spoils one's teeth, and teaches one to make faces. Do not take anything but what is agreeable to you, let people say what they may!

## AXEL TO ANNA.

Wait, and wait, and wait, for ever! You good people, who so calmly and so immoveably admonish to patience, and waiting, and quietness, Heaven must

have made you, in its anger, out of so much earth, that you cannot conceive to yourselves an idea of fire and air. Your barometer, which perpetually stands at the monotonous height of steady and fine weather, has not the least thing in common with that which for ever falls and rises in sensitive hearts—from repose to storm—from sunshine to rain. God bless you, ye good folks! I am sorry for you with my whole heart.

## AXEL TO ANNA.

It is you, Anna, whom I have to thank, that I no longer feel those oppressive pangs, those gnawings of conscience. Fear not, my Anna, that although the consequences of my transgressions—crimes they were—through the mercy of God, were so soon abrogated,—fear not that the remembrance will ever be extinguished in my soul. I shall never forget them!—I will remind myself every moment how fervently I must strive after making you forget what I once was. My gentle Anna, thou only shalt forget it.

## ANNA TO AXEL.

I can hold the pen once more!—can again write to Axel—my Axel! Yet you must not come down to me; I am still too weak. To see you again, with the full consciousness—with the full feeling of our happiness—for that I am still too weak.

## ANNA TO AXEL.

My thanks, Axel, for the flowers, fruit, and all which you have sent to me. My chamber now resembles a beautiful garden. My aunt, to be sure, is not satisfied with this change; but she does not trust herself to say one word against it. Ever since the moment when you from the sill of my chamber-door set her up aloft on the bookcase, and besought her to be quiet, she has had such a panic fear of you that she never ventures to touch anything which comes from you. She seems to dread that an electrical spark may start forth from the thing which you have handled. As far as concerns myself, I find the flowers so beautiful, the fruit so good, that I see myself surrounded by them with the most heartfelt satisfaction, although they come from the wild, violent Axel.

Axel, we have been, however, unjust towards our relations. We wished to plunge into misery,—they wished to hinder our doing so. Were they wrong in doing so? They were perhaps too stern, but their intention was good.

## AXEL TO ANNA.

You find yourself worse to-day, Rosina tells me—the too strong smell of the flowers. Oh! I, bird of ill luck! Pull them out, and fling all the pots out of the window, this very moment, otherwise I shall



come and do it myself. Anna, may I? Anna, let me come!

## ANNA TO AXEL.

Out of compassion for the heads of the poor passers-by, and out of justice to the innocent flower-pots themselves, they are not thrown out of the window, but only carried out into another room; where I, for the first time, will again see my Axel, when I have strength enough for it. You may not come to me. In the mean time, be quite easy about me—I am now well again.

## AXEL TO ANNA.

Now God be praised!—that is all I can say. Should not you, however, perhaps, take a strengthening medicine? Ask the doctor, dearest Anna. Or it is the best that I should speak with him when he comes from you—the happy fellow!

## ANNA TO AXEL.

We shall see whether you recognise me, Axel, when you see me again. I am very much changed by my illness; thin, pale, with sunken eyes and cheeks; not any longer pretty, no longer like the Crown Princess in the least.

## AXEL TO ANNA.

Look, Anna, I imagine to myself that you are

become lame—that your eyes are little and squinting like your aunt’s—that your nose is flat, your teeth black, your hands green, your feet big. I imagine to myself that my Anna is become thus through my fault; my Anna, with her angel-heart, her heavenly goodness. And at the feet of *this* Anna, I long, I burn with impatience, to throw myself, and to say to her—“Anna, I am unworthy of you, but I love you indescribably. Despise me not—thrust me not away—love me for my love’s sake. Be again poor—but be mine; and, as a begging-gipsy, I will nevertheless every day of my life thank heaven and you for a happiness whose excess I am unable to bear.

#### ANNA TO AXEL.

O fanatic! I fear your wings will not carry you far. Be calm in the mean time—you will not be so severely tried. Anna is no longer lovely—but *thus* she does not look. But Axel, when will you be less violent, less eccentric, when more reasonable!

#### AXEL TO ANNA.

When you are my wife; when I see you, hear you, am with you every day, every hour. Yet that which I lately wrote was no exaggeration, no fanaticism; it was my heart’s most inward, truest feeling.

#### ANNA TO AXEL.

O the indescribably charming air of spring! I

enjoy it through the open window, sitting among your flowers. The sun penetrates me with new life and new warmth. The birds twitter upon the budding trees of the terrace; all is beautiful, mild, and glorious! If there be a feeling on earth that is delicious and blesses, that calls forth sweet tears of joy and of peace, it is after a bed of sickness and pain, when one awakens again to life—to a life, where only spring airs, and only flowers, beckon to us. How quiet, how pure, is all within us! How accessible are we to joy, how inclined to all that is good! I have to-day, in beautiful, inestimable moments, saluted life, and have inwardly thanked the All-good Giver of it. To-morrow, Axel, I expect you; to-morrow, about noon.

## AXEL TO ANNA.

To-morrow! I cannot say more; nay, all lies in the word—to-morrow!

## ANNA TO AXEL.

We will be quiet and calm, Axel. We were children before,—now we are become old. We have suffered—do not let us forget that. Like tempests, which purify the air, are the passions to the soul. When they have ceased to rage, may they also have been so to us. Axel, we will be quiet, clear, pure, and full of peace, like this beautiful spring day.

To-day, about noon, Axel. I have selected the most beautiful oranges, that I may eat them with

you. You must also see how well your flowers have been cared for. To water them, and attend to them, has been the first and dearest exercise of my returning strength.

## AXEL TO ANNA.

I have seen you! For several hours I have not been able to write. Now it is evening—dark, silent, calm,—now I am stiller. But I know one thing only; I feel one thing; I have seen you!

## AXEL TO ANNA.

Anna, you are divinely good—angelically beautiful! O you have nothing earthly about you! Your love, Anna! O that is every thing for me!

## AXEL TO ANNA.

How charming were you in the white simple dress! Dress always thus, Anna! White does not become every one, but this colour seems made for you—you snow-white innocence. How you sate there in the bright flower world, so simple, so white, so inexpressibly lovely! you seemed to me a pure angel, whose lofty humility ought to receive the homage of all the greatness of the earth. For one moment it fell like a veil before my eyes; I took this for a cloud which floated around you, and I fancied for one inconsiderate minute, that you were being floated away

to the land which is high above the clouds. At your knees, your hands in mine, my lips upon yours, I awoke—saw you—saw myself—saw the earth—No, heaven!

## AXEL TO ANNA.

I can scarcely accustom myself to my happiness, so sudden, so great, so undeserved, as it is. Every morning it surprises me almost like an earthquake. And I must, indeed, speak Anna's sweet name fifty times before the stormy beating of my heart becomes calmer.

Now I must see Emil, and tell him that he is an angel. I will go to him. Ah, there he comes even to me.

## AXEL TO ANNA.

A house bought—furniture; the domestic management brought into order—my business arranged; the banns published to-day—in eight days the marriage! “Emil, who art thou? Art thou an angel—a God?” “I am—Anna's lover!” “O the thous—you should leave that!” “I will be your common friend.” “You may never come into my house!” “Thither shall I—not now—I will take a journey.” “But you come again, however?” “As a married man. Farewell, Axel! be worthy of Anna, be happy!”

This Emil—and—and I! Anna, how does this Emil please you?

## ANNA TO AXEL.

He is better, nobler than Axel; but I only love Axel; so unreasonable, so inexplicable is the human heart, so weak is mine. Do you reproach me, Axel?

## AXEL TO ANNA.

Anna, reconcile me with myself. I am not worthy of you, I never can be!

## ANNA TO AXEL.

I love you—and in a few days will be your wife—who from you expects her whole well-being—her whole happiness.

Your little sister shall come to us. I will be her mother.

## AXEL TO ANNA.

If the angels of heaven would take in hand to make people wise and good by benefits, I would bet ten to one that they would succeed.

I write no more to you, Anna—I remain with you.

Notes remind me only of bolted doors, of jealousy, mistrusts and despair; and away with bolted doors, with black despair, black jealousy, and all black things,—yes, even with ink—away with it! May these between my wife and me never become necessary!

## ANNA TO AXEL.

*Amen!*

## JANNE TO HER SISTER ULLA.

Do you know, dear Ulla, the correspondence, as it was called, is now at an end. The whole spring-time have I been running up stairs and down stairs with little written bits of paper, called notes, between a young lady and a young gentleman. And I had always the while a pair of boots or shoes, which I was always cleaning in my hand, and I looked as innocent as a blacking-bottle. And do you know that for every note which I delivered in the stated place, I got one, or indeed two, three shillings, and several times a whole dollar in my pocket. Several times I received a few good sound boxes on my ear from the young gentleman, who was passionate beyond measure; and indeed for this reason, because I had not a note, whilst he declared that I must have one, namely, from the young lady. For which, however, I afterwards received as a plaster, a twelve-shilling note, so that I would willingly have had more of them.

How many notes there were altogether is more than my poor head can count. The sum and substance is, that I have scraped together thirty rix-dollars; that I shall leave the dear city of Stockholm,

where a bit of bread and butter costs more than the whole stomach is worth; that I hasten home towards Småland, buy our mother a little house, and after all my drudgery settle down with her in quiet. Here I am no longer of any use. The correspondence is at an end. The gentlefolks are married. God give them His peace!

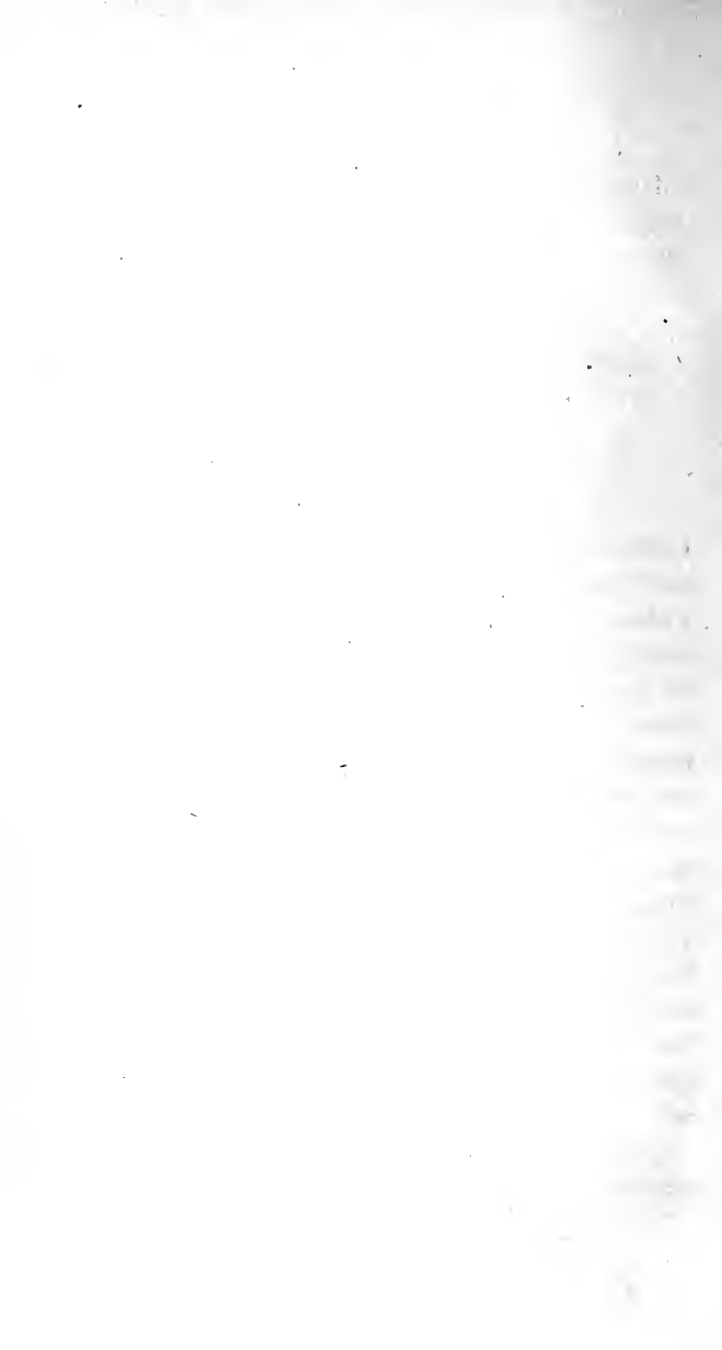
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## HOPES.

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## H O P E S.

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I had a peculiar method of wandering without very much pain along the stormy path of life, although, in a physical as well as in a moral sense, I wandered almost barefoot,—I *hoped*, hoped from day to day; in the morning my hopes rested on evening, in the evening on the morning; in the autumn upon the spring, in spring upon the autumn; from this year to the next, and thus, amid mere hopes, I had passed through nearly thirty years of my life, without, of all my privations, painfully perceiving the want of anything but whole boots. Nevertheless, I consoled myself easily for this out of doors in the open air, but in a drawing-room it always gave me an uneasy manner to have to turn the heels, as being the part least torn, to the front. Much more oppressive was it to me, truly, that I could in the abodes of misery only console with kind words.

I comforted myself, like a thousand others, by a hopeful glance upon the rolling wheel of fortune,

and with the philosophical remark, "when the time comes, comes the counsel."

As a poor assistant to a country clergyman with a narrow income and meagre table, morally becoming mouldy in the company of the scolding housekeeper, of the willingly fuddled clergyman, of a foolish young gentleman, and the daughters of the house, who, with high shoulders and turned-in toes, went from morning to night paying visits, I felt a peculiarly strange emotion of tenderness and joy as one of my acquaintance informed me by writing, that my uncle, the Merchant P——, in Stockholm, to me personally unknown, now lay dying, and in a paroxysm of kindred affection had inquired after his good-for-nothing nephew.

With a flat, meagre little bundle and a million of rich hopes, the grateful nephew now allows himself to be shook up hill and down hill, upon an uncommonly uncomfortable and stiff-necked peasant-cart, and arrived head-over-heels in the capital.

In the inn where I alighted I ordered for myself a little—only a very little breakfast,—a trifle—a bit of bread and butter—a few eggs.

The landlord and a fat gentleman walked up and down the saloon and chatted. "Nay, that I must say," said the fat gentleman, "this Merchant P——, who died the day before yesterday, he was a fine fellow."

"Yes, yes," thought I; "aha, aha, a fine fellow, who had heaps of money! Hear you, my friend,"

(to the waiter), "could not you get me a bit of venison, or some other solid dish? Hear you, a cup of bouillon would not be amiss. Look after it, but quick!"

"Yes," said mine host now, "it is strong! Thirty thousand dollars, and they banko! Nobody in the whole world could have dreamed of it—thirty thousand!"

"Thirty thousand!" repeated I, in my exultant soul, "thirty thousand! Hear, youth, waiter! Make haste, give me here thirty thou—; no, give me here banko,—no, give me here a glass of wine, I mean;" and from head to heart there sang in me, amid the trumpet-beat of every pulse in alternating echoes, "Thirty thousand! Thirty thousand!"

"Yes," continued the fat gentleman, "and would you believe that in the mass of debts there are nine hundred dollars for cutlets, and five thousand dollars for champagne. And now all his creditors stand there prettily, and open their mouths; all the things in the house are hardly worth two farthings; and out of the house they find, as the only indemnification—a calasch!"

"Aha, that is something quite different! Hear you, youth, waiter! Eh, come you here! take that meat, and the bouillon, and the wine away again; and hear you, observe well, that I have not eaten a morsel of all this. How could I, indeed; I that ever since I opened my eyes this morning have done nothing else but eat (a horrible untruth!) and it just

now occurs to me that it would therefore be unnecessary to pay money for such a superfluous feast."

"But you have actually ordered it," replied the waiter in a state of excitement.

"My friend," I replied, and seized myself behind the ear, a place whence people, who are in embarrassment, are accustomed in some sort of way to obtain the necessary help; "my friend, it was a mistake for which I must not be punished; for it was not my fault that a rich heir, for whom I ordered the breakfast, is all at once become poor,—yes, poorer than many a poor devil, because he has lost more than the half of his present means upon the future. If he, under these circumstances, as you may well imagine, cannot pay for a dear breakfast, yet it does not prevent my paying for the eggs which I have devoured, and giving you over and above something handsome for your trouble, as business compels me to move off from here immediately!"

By my excellent logic, and the "something handsome," I removed from my throat, with a bleeding heart and a watering mouth, that dear breakfast, and wandered forth into the city, with my little bundle under my arm, to seek for a cheap room, whilst I considered where I was to get the money for it.

In consequence of the violent coming in contact of hope and reality I had a little headache. But when I saw upon my ramble a gentleman, ornamented with ribbons and stars, alight from a magnificent carriage,

who had a pale yellow complexion, a deeply wrinkled brow, and above his eyebrows an intelligible trace of ill-humour; when I saw a young count, with whom I had become acquainted in the University of Upsala, walking along as if he were about to fall on his nose from age and weariness of life, I held up my head, inhaled the air, which accidentally (unfortunately) at this place was filled with the smell of smoked sausage, and extolled poverty and a pure heart.

I found at length, in a remote street, a little room, which was more suited to my gloomy prospects than to the bright hopes which I cherished two hours before.

I had obtained permission to spend the winter in Stockholm, and had thought of spending it in quite a different way to what now was to be expected. But what was to be done? To let the courage sink was the worst of all; to lay the hands in the lap and look up to heaven, not much better. "The sun breaks forth when one least expects it," thought I, as heavy autumn clouds descended upon the city. I determined to use all the means I could to obtain for myself a decent subsistence, with a somewhat pleasanter prospect for the future, than was opened to me under the miserable protection of Pastor G., and, in the mean time, to earn my daily bread by copying,—a sorrowful expedient in a sorrowful condition.

Thus I passed my days amid fruitless endeavours to find ears which might not be deaf, amid the heart-

wearing occupation of writing out fairly the empty productions of empty heads, with my dinners becoming more and more scanty, and with ascending hopes, until that evening against whose date I afterwards made a cross in my calendar.

My host had just left me with the friendly admonition to pay the first quarter's rent on the following day, if I did not prefer (the politeness is French) to march forth again with bag and baggage on a voyage of discovery through the streets of the city.

It was just eight o'clock, on an indescribably cold November evening, when I was revived with this affectionate salutation on my return from a visit to a sick person, for whom I, perhaps—really somewhat inconsiderately, had emptied my purse.

I snuffed my sleepy thin candle with my fingers, and glanced around the little dark chamber, for the further use of which I must soon see myself compelled to gold-making.

“Diogenes dwelt worse,” sighed I, with a submissive mind, as I drew a lame table from the window where the wind and rain were not contented to stop outside. At that moment my eye fell upon a brilliantly blazing fire in a kitchen, which lay Tantalus-like directly opposite to my modest room, where the fireplace was as dark as possible. “Cooks, men and women, have the happiest lot of all serving mortals!” thought I, as with a secret desire to play that fire-tending game, I contemplated the well-fed dame,



amid iron-pots and stewpans, standing there like an empress in the glory of the fire light, and with the firetongs-sceptre rummaging about majestically in the glowing realm.

A story higher, I had, through a window, which was concealed by no envious curtain, the view into a brightly lighted room, where a numerous family were assembled round a tea-table covered with cups and bread-baskets.

I was stiff in my whole body, from cold and damp. How empty it was in that part which may be called the magazine, I do not say; but, Ah, Lord God! thought I, if, however, that pretty girl, who over there takes a cup of tea-nectar and rich splendid rusks to that fat gentleman who, from satiety, can hardly raise himself from the sofa, would but reach out her lovely hand a little further, and could—she would with a thousand kisses—in vain!—ah, the satiated gentleman takes his cup; he steeps and steeps his rusk with such eternal slowness—it might be wine. Now the charming girl caresses him. I am curious whether it is the dear papa himself, or the uncle, or, perhaps—. Ah, the enviable mortal! But no, it is quite impossible; he is at least forty years older than she. See, that indeed must be his wife—an elderly lady, who sits near him on the sofa, and who offers rusks to the young lady. The old lady seems very dignified; but to whom does she go now? I cannot see the person. An ear and a piece of a

shoulder are all that peeps forth near the window. I cannot exactly take it amiss, that the respectable person turns his back to me; but that he keeps the young lady a quarter of an hour standing before him, lets her curtsy and offer her good things, does thoroughly provoke me. It must be a lady—a man could not be so unpolite towards this angelic being. But—or—— now she takes the cup; and now, O woe! a great man's hand grasps into the rusk-basket—the savage! and how he helps himself—the churl! I should like to know whether it is her brother,—he was perhaps hungry, poor fellow! Now come in one after the other, two lovely children, who are like the sister. I wonder now, whether the good man with one ear has left anything remaining. That most charming of girls, how she caresses the little ones, and kisses them, and gives to them all the rusks and the cakes that have escaped the fingers of Monsieur Gobble. Now she has had herself, the sweet child! of the whole entertainment, no more than me—the smell.

What a movement suddenly takes place in the room! The old gentleman heaves himself up from the sofa—the person with one ear starts forward, and in so doing, gives the young lady a blow (the dromedary!) which makes her knock against the tea-table, whereby the poor lady, who was just about springing up from the sofa, is pushed down again—the children hop about and clap their hands—the

door flies open—a young officer enters—the young girl throws herself into his arms. So, indeed! Aha, now we have it! I put to my shutters so violently that they cracked, and seated myself on a chair, quite wet through with rain, and with my knees trembling.

What had I to do at the window? That is what one gets when one is inquisitive.

Eight days ago, this family had removed from the country into the handsome house opposite to me; and it had never yet occurred to me to ask who they were, or whence they came. What need was there for me to-night to make myself acquainted with their domestic concerns in an illicit manner? How could it interest me? I was in an ill-humour; perhaps, too, I felt some little heartache. But for all that, true to my resolution, not to give myself up to anxious thoughts when they could do no good, I seized the pen with stiff fingers, and, in order to dissipate my vexation, wished to attempt a description of domestic happiness, of a happiness which I had never enjoyed. For the rest, I philosophised whilst I blew upon my stiffened hands. “Am I the first who, in the hot hour of fancy, has sought for a warmth which the stern world of reality has denied him? Six dollars for a measure of fir-wood. Yes, prosit, thou art not likely to get it before December! I write!”

“Happy, threefold happy, the family, in whose

narrow contracted circle no heart bleeds solitarily, or solitarily rejoices! No look, no smile, remains unanswered; and where the friends say daily, not with words but with deeds, to each other, 'Thy cares, thy joys, thy happiness, are mine also!'

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"Lovely is the peaceful, the quiet home, which closes itself protectingly around the weary pilgrim through life—which, around its friendly blazing hearth, assembles for repose the old man leaning on his staff, the strong man, the affectionate wife, and happy children, who, shouting and exulting, hop about in their earthly heaven, and closing a day spent in the pastimes of innocence, repeat a thanksgiving prayer with smiling lips, and drop asleep on the bosom of their parents, whilst the gentle voice of the mother tells them, in whispered cradle-tones, how around their couch—

" The little angels in a ring,  
Stand round about to keep  
A watchful guard upon the bed  
Where little children sleep."

Here I was obliged to leave off, because I felt something resembling a drop of rain come forth from my eye, and therefore could not any longer see clearly.

"How many," thought I, as my reflections, against my will, took a melancholy turn: "how many are there who must, to their sorrow, do without this

highest happiness of earthly life—domestic happiness!”

For one moment I contemplated myself in the only whole glass which I had in my room—that *of truth*,—and then wrote again with gloomy feeling:—“Unhappy, indeed, may the forlorn one be called, who, in the anxious and cool moments of life (which, indeed, come so often), is pressed to no faithful heart, whose sigh nobody returns, whose quiet grief nobody alleviates with a ‘I understand thee, I suffer with thee!’

“He is cast down, nobody raises him up; he weeps, nobody sees it, nobody will see it; he goes, nobody follows him; he comes, nobody goes to meet him; he rests, nobody watches over him. He is lonely. O how unfortunate he is! Why dies he not? Ah, who would weep for him? How cold is a grave which no warm tears of love moisten!

“He is lonesome in the winter night; for him the earth has no flowers, and dark burn the lights of heaven. Why wanders he, the lonesome one; why waits he; why flies he not, the shadow, to the land of shades? Ah, he still hopes, he is a mendicant who begs for joy, who yet waits in the eleventh hour, that a merciful hand may give him an alms.

“One only little blossom of earth will he gather, bear it upon his heart, in order henceforth not so lonesomely, not so entirely lonesome, to wander down to rest.”

It was my own condition which I described. I deplored myself.

Early deprived of my parents, without brothers and sisters, friends and relations, I stood in the world yet so 'solitary and forlorn, that but for an inward confidence in heaven, and a naturally happy temper, I should often enough have wished to leave this contemptuous world; till now, however, I had almost constantly hoped from the future, and this more from an instinctive feeling that this might be the best, than to subdue by philosophy every too vivid wish for an agreeable present time, because it was altogether so opposed to possibility. For some time, however, alas! it had been otherwise with me; I felt, and especially this evening, more than ever an inexpressible desire to have somebody to love,—to have some one about me who would cleave to me—who would be a friend to me;—in short, to have (for me the highest felicity on earth) a wife—a beloved, devoted wife! O she would comfort me, she would cheer me! her affection, even in the poorest hut, would make of me a king. That the love-fire of my heart would not insure the faithful being at my side from being frozen was soon made clearly sensible to me by an involuntary shudder. More dejected than ever, I rose up and walked a few times about my room (that is to say, two steps right forward, and then turn back again). The sense of my condition followed me like the shadow on the wall, and for the

first time in my life I felt myself cast down, and threw a gloomy look on my dark future. I had no patron, therefore could not reckon upon promotion for a long time, consequently also not upon my own bread—on a friend—a wife, I mean.

“But what in all the world,” said I yet once more seriously to myself, “what helps beating one’s brains?” Yet once more I tried to get rid of all anxious thoughts. “If, however, a Christian soul could only come to me this evening! Let it be whoever it would—friend or foe—it would be better than this solitude. Yes, even if an inhabitant of the world of spirits opened the door, he would be welcome to me! What was that? Three blows on the door! I will not, however, believe it—again three!” I went and opened; there was nobody there; only the wind went howling up and down the stairs. I hastily shut the door again, thrust my hands into my pockets, and went up and down for a while humming aloud. Some moments afterwards I fancied I heard a sigh!—I was silent, and listened,—again there was very evidently a sigh—and yet once again, so deep and so mournful that I exclaimed with secret terror, “Who is there?” No answer.

For a moment I stood still, and considered what this really could mean, when a horrible noise, as if cats were sent with yells lumbering down the whole flight of stairs, and ended with a mighty blow against my door, put an end to my indecision. I took up

the candle, and a stick, and went out. At the moment when I opened the door my light was blown out. A gigantic white figure glimmered opposite to me, and I felt myself suddenly embraced by two strong arms. I cried for help, and struggled so actively to get loose, that both myself and my adversary fell to the ground, but so that I lay uppermost. Like an arrow I sprung again upright, and was about to fetch a light, when I stumbled over something—God knows what it was (I firmly believe that somebody held me fast by the feet), by which I fell a second time, struck my head on the corner of the table, and lost my consciousness, whilst a suspicious noise, which had great resemblance to laughter, rung in my ears.

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When I again opened my eyes, they met a dazzling blaze of light. I closed them again, and listened to a confused noise around me—opened them again a very little, and endeavoured to distinguish the objects which surrounded me, which appeared to me so enigmatical and strange that I almost feared my mind had wandered. I lay upon a sofa, and—No, I really did not deceive myself,—that charming girl, who on this evening had so incessantly floated before my thoughts, stood actually beside me, and with a heavenly expression of sympathy bathed my head with vinegar. A young man whose countenance seemed known to



me, held my hand between his. I perceived also the fat gentleman, another thin one, the lady, the children, and in distant twilight I saw the shimmer of the paradise of the tea-table; in short, I found myself by an incomprehensible whim of fate amidst the family which an hour before I had contemplated with such lively sympathy.

When I again had returned to full consciousness, the young man embraced me several times with military vehemence.

“Do you then no longer know me?” cried he indignantly as he saw me petrified body and soul. “Have you then forgotten August D——, whose life a short time since you saved at the peril of your own? whom you so handsomely fished up, with danger to yourself, from having for ever to remain in the uninteresting company of fishes? See here, my father my mother, my sister Wilhelmina!”

I pressed his hand; and now the parents embraced me. With a stout blow of the fist upon the table, August’s father exclaimed, “And because you have saved my son’s life, and because you are such a downright honest and good fellow, and have suffered hunger yourself—that you might give others to eat—you shall really have the parsonage at H——. Yes, you shall become clergyman! I say—I have *jus patronatum*, you understand!”

For a good while I was not at all in a condition to comprehend, to think, or to speak; and before all had

been cleared up by a thousand explanations, I could understand nothing clearly excepting that Wilhelmina was not—that Wilhelmina was August's sister.

He had returned this evening from a journey of service, during which, in the preceding summer, chance had given to me the good fortune to rescue him from a danger, into which youthful heat and excess of spirit had thrown him. I had not seen him again since this occurrence; earlier, I had made a passing acquaintance with him, had drunk brotherhood with him at the university, and after that had forgotten my dear brother.

He had now related this occurrence to his family, with the easily kindled-up enthusiasm of youth, together with what he knew of me beside, and what he did not know. The father, who had a living in his gift, and who (as I afterwards found) had made from his window some compassionate remarks upon my meagre dinner-table, determined, assailed by the prayers of his son, to raise me from the lap of poverty to the summit of fortune. August would in his rapture announce to me my good luck instantly, and in order, at the same time, to gratify his passion for merry jokes, made himself known upon my stairs in a way which occasioned me a severe, although not dangerous, contusion on the temples, and the unexpected removal across the street, out of the deepest darkness into the brightest light. The good youth besought a thousand times forgiveness for his thought-

lessness; a thousand times I assured him that it was not worth the trouble to speak of such a trifling blow. And in fact, the living was a balsam, which would have made a greater wound than this imperceptible also.

Astonished, and somewhat embarrassed, I now perceived that the ear and the shoulder, whose possessor had seized so horribly upon the contents of the rusk-basket, and over whom I had poured out my gall, belonged to nobody else than to August's father and my patron. The fat gentleman who sate upon the sofa, was Wilhelmina's uncle.

The kindness and gaiety of my new friends made me soon feel at home and happy. The old people treated me like a child of the house, the young ones as a brother, and the two little ones seemed to anticipate a gingerbread-friend in me.

After I had received two cups of tea from Wilhelmina's pretty hand, to which I almost feared taking, in my abstraction of mind, more rusks than my excellent patron, I rose up to take my leave. They insisted absolutely upon my passing the night there; but I abode by my determination of spending the first happy night in my old habitation, amid thanksgiving to the lofty Ruler of my fate.

They all embraced me afresh; and I now also embraced all rightly, from the bottom of my heart, Wilhelmina also, although not without having gracious permission first. "I might as well have left

that alone," thought I afterwards, "if it is to be the first and the last time!" August accompanied me back.

My host stood in my room amid the overturned chairs and tables, with a countenance which alternated between rain and sunshine; on one side his mouth drew itself with a reluctant smile up to his ear, on the other it crept for vexation down to his double chin; the eyes followed the same direction, and the whole had the look of a combat, till the tone in which August indicated to him that he should leave us alone, changed all into the most friendly, grinning mien, and the proprietor of the same vanished from the door with the most submissive bows.

August was in despair about my table, my chair, my bed, and so on. It was with difficulty that I withheld him from cudgeling the host who would take money for such a hole. I was obliged to satisfy him with the most holy assurances, that on the following day I would remove without delay. "But tell him," prayed August, "before you pay him, that he is a villain, a usurer, a cheat, a —— or if you like, I will ——."

"No, no, heaven defend us!" interrupted I, "be quiet, and let me only manage."

After my young friend had left me, I passed several happy hours in thinking on the change in my fate, and inwardly thanking God for it.

My thoughts then rambled to the parsonage; and

heaven knows what fat oxen and cows, what pleasure-grounds, with flowers, fruits, and vegetables, I saw in spirit surrounding my new paradise, where my Eve walked by my side, and supported on my arm; and especially what an innumerable crowd of happy and edified people I saw streaming from the church when I had preached. I baptized, I confirmed, I comforted my beloved community in the zeal and warmth of my heart—and forgot only the funerals.

Every poor clergyman who has received a living, every mortal, especially to whom unexpectedly a long cherished wish has been accomplished, will easily picture to himself my state.

Later in the night it sunk at last like a veil before my eyes, and my thoughts fell by degrees into a bewilderment which exhibited on every hand strange images. I preached with a loud voice in my church, and the congregation slept. After the service the people came out of the church like oxen and cows, and bellowed against me when I would have admonished them. I wished to embrace my wife, but could not separate her from a great turnip, which increased every moment, and at last grew over both our heads. I endeavoured to climb up a ladder to heaven, whose stars beckoned kindly and brightly to me; but potatoes, grass, vetches; and peas, entangled my feet unmercifully, and hindered every step. At last I saw myself in the midst of my possessions walking upon my head, and whilst in my sleepy soul I greatly

wondered how this was possible, I slept soundly in the remembrance of my dream. Yet then, however; I must unconsciously have continued the chain of my pastoral thoughts, for I woke in the morning with the sound of my own voice loudly exclaiming, "Amen!"

That the occurrences of the former evening were actual truth, and no dream, I could only convince myself with difficulty, till August paid me a visit, and invited me to dine with his parents.

The living, Wilhelmina, the dinner, the new chain of hopes for the future which beamed from the bright sun of the present, all surprised me anew with a joy which one can feel very well, but never can describe.

Out of the depths of a thankful heart, I saluted the new life which opened to me, with the firm determination, that let happen what might, yet always *to do the right, and to hope for the best.*

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Two years after this, I sate on an autumn evening in my beloved parsonage by the fire. Near to me sate my dear little wife, my sweet Wilhelmina, and spun. I was just about to read to her a sermon which I intended to preach on the next Sunday, and from which I promised myself much edification, as well for her as for the assembled congregation. Whilst I was turning over the leaves, a loose paper fell out. It was the paper upon which, on that evening two years

before, in a very different situation, I had written down my cheerful and my sad thoughts. I shewed it to my wife. She read, smiled with a tear in her eye, and with a roguish countenance which, as I fancy, is peculiar to her, took the pen and wrote on the other side of the paper:—

“ The author can now, thank God, strike out a description which would stand in perfect contrast to that which he once, in a dark hour, sketched of an unfortunate person, as he himself was then.

“ Now he is no more lonesome, no more deserted. His still sighs are answered, his secret griefs shared, by a wife tenderly devoted to him. He goes, her heart follows him; he comes back, she meets him with smiles; his tears flow not unobserved, they are dried by her hand, and his smiles beam again in hers; for him she gathers flowers, to wreath around his brow, to strew in his path. He has his own fireside, friends devoted to him, and counts as his relations all those who have none of their own. He loves, he is beloved; he can make people happy, he is himself happy.”

Truly had my Wilhelmina described the present; and, animated by feelings which are gay and delicious as the beams of the spring sun, I will now, as hitherto, let my little troop of light hopes bound out into the future.

I hope too, that my sermon for the next Sunday may not be without benefit to my hearers; and even if the obdurate should sleep, I hope that neither this

nor any other of the greater or the less unpleasantnesses which can happen to me, may go to my heart and disturb my rest. I know my Wilhelmina, and believe also that I know myself sufficiently, to hope with certainty that I may always make her happy. The sweet angel has given me hope that we may soon be able to add a little creature to our little happy family, I hope, in the future, to be yet multiplied. For my children I have all kinds of hopes *in petto*. If I have a son, I hope that he will be my successor; if I have a daughter, then—if August would wait—but I fancy that he is just about to be married.

I hope in time to find a publisher for my sermons. I hope to live yet a hundred years with my wife.

We—that is to say, my Wilhelmina and I—hope, during this time, to be able to dry a great many tears, and to shed as few ourselves as our lot, as children of the earth, may permit.

We hope not to survive each other.

Lastly, we hope always to be able to hope; and when the hour comes that the hopes of the green earth vanish before the clear light of eternal certainty, then we hope that the All-good Father may pass a mild sentence upon his grateful and in humility hoping children.



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THE TWINS.

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## THE TWINS.

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Two charming rosebuds (the last in my garden) are frozen in this October night. I had so heartily pleased myself with the thought of delighting my old mother, who is a great friend of flowers, and, especially at this season, calls them her jewels, with two beautiful roses. Now my two hopeful buds hang without life and colour on the stem; they are gone—and with them my little birthday pleasure.

I contemplated them long, and felt the while tears come to my eyes. They were consecrated to the memory of two rosebuds of a nobler kind, which, hopeful as these lovely flowers, like these also withered away early before the night-frost of life.

Edward and Ellna, my young friends, how often in lonely hours does your friendly image visit me! Like mild breezes of spring are the remembrances of you wafted to me from the time when I was so often with you,—heard you, saw you, and in you the loveliest things which God had created on earth.

When I now see splendid fruit which has fallen

before its maturity, a blossom with a worm in the bud, any thing beautiful and good which soon vanishes, then I think on—Edward and Ellna!

Behold there, the beautiful country-seat surrounded by a magnificent park, where they dwelt with their happy mother! They were the youngest of many children which she had borne, the only ones for which she had not yet wept.

They were her darlings, her all.

They were so lovely that one could not contemplate them without emotion. The eye, wearied with the many unpleasantnesses and adversities which everywhere meet it, would repose with delight upon these charming beings, who in the pure glory of child-like innocence stood there, like promises of a fairer and better creation.

Their smile was particularly charming—oh, it was mirrored in their souls, that depth of innocence and joy! Two dew-drops, sent down from heaven in order to refresh the earth, reflect their image in their breast.

“Happy childhood!” have I heard thousands exclaim, who had already drank deeper from the cup of life, to whose edge children have only set their lips, and kissed away the fiery foam. “Happy childhood!” to thee is vouchsafed to drink amid pastimes the pure nectar of joy—whilst we, amid weariness and labour, seek in vain for a refreshing drop in the mournful draught which is extended to us.

And yet for all that, it appears to me that it is not with justice that childhood is called so happy. How many tears are shed by children! Tears of impatience, of desire, of anger; tears which shame and reproaches wring out; tears of envy, of indignation, and of despair,—in one word, all the passions which poison the draught of life to maturer hearts.

It is true that they need not shed these tears, if a wise commiserating hand always removed the thorns from the path which the little pilgrims of life tread. But often, quite too often, they are not removed—they are strown upon it. Constraint, unjust reproaches, grow up like poisonous nettles around the poor little ones. How often have I seen it; how often have I exclaimed, “You poor children, you poor little children! why did they give a life to you, whose few spring-flowers they do not permit you to pluck?”

Freedom—freedom, this west-wind of joy, whose pure spirit alone is able to bring forth to perfection every flower of creation—if they gave but freedom to you innocent little ones, to you—born for immortality—who must wander through a stormy land! The breezes of freedom, not the simoom-wind of constraint, should attend your first steps, and the world then would not see so many feeble wanderers sink down powerless, and crawl wearily along their way.

The first years of Edward and Ellna’s life passed on in innocent freedom. Beautiful, friendly nature was their cradle. In the fields, in the woods and

groves, now they played, and now they rested. Often, as with their arms clasped round each other they lay upon the soft carpet of grass, had they been heard to talk of the angels, whose wings they saw in the clouds, which, parted by light gales, floated away in the blue heaven, high above the dark green summit of the wood. They have been seen to smile,—yes, sometimes to talk confidentially and child-like with them, praise their beauty, which (as they said) was far greater than their own. Often did they raise their small child voices to accompany the tones of heavenly harps, which they heard mingled with the voices of the wood. Their mother, who was always near them, believed in the reality of these appearances. And what, indeed, can one say against them?—that one has not oneself experienced anything of the kind. But how rarely was any one so angel-like and happy as Edward and Ellna!

Every one who knew them was obliged to acknowledge that they had never seen their like; and many a one questioned in pious rapture, whether these children were really like other mortals.

Around their white foreheads fell light-brown curls; like stars beamed forth their eyes below, in soft magical brightness. The charming smiles of childhood parted constantly their lovely lips, and formed in the rose-tinted cheeks little dimples, which people, I know not rightly why, so gladly kissed.

Their whole bodies were so beautifully formed,

their hands in particular were so perfect, that I once saw how a sculptor fell into rapture over their contemplation; and how an old gardener, not otherwise distinguished for his politeness and fine breeding, borrowed a pair of gloves that he might be able to conduct the little Ellna about his garden, the most beautiful flowers of which soon lay in her muslin apron.

Accustomed therefore to be admired without knowing why, Edward and Ellna shewed themselves gladly to every one who wished to see them, and quietly smiling, allowed themselves to be praised and caressed.

"We are so beautiful," said they in their innocence, without knowing what beauty was, and that the world considered the possession of this a piece of good fortune. The agreeable impression which, as they knew, they made, seemed, however, to give them pleasure, but only because it was so agreeable to others.

"Look at us!" said they to an old man, who wept the loss of his only son, "look at us, and weep no more!"

Accustomed to call forth a smile upon all countenances, they betrayed astonishment that any one could see them and yet weep, and in their grief, not to be able to give satisfaction, they began also to weep with him. That which their smiles could not do, they now effected by their tears. The old man took them in his arms, and felt himself refreshed, as by the

sympathy of angels. They were then heard to say to the mourner, "Look at us, we weep with you!"

Thus did these little Christians already in childhood follow the example of their Master.

People call children good. I declare that I have seen few which were not severe and cruel. Unthinking (therefore innocent) savages, they often torment in the most horrible manner creatures which are small and defenceless enough to become their victims. They curiously contemplate their convulsive movements amid torture, and rarely avoid causing them pain. O that so many people, who already know, who have already experienced themselves what pain is, should resemble these cruel little ones! They are not like them—innocent!

Often have I exclaimed with murmuring pain on the observation of their cruel pleasures, and the torments which their so-called necessary wants, their desire of knowledge, their inhumanity causes to millions of innocent creatures—"Man, this being that more than all suffers on the earth, and causes most suffering—O why was he created?"

Yet I know that all will be good one day,—no more tears will be shed—there will be no more pain. Humbling my head, I will quietly hope and wait for that higher light which is here denied to us. There is a God; therefore let the murmurs of man be silent!

Edward and Ellna were not cruel, as the children



of earth are commonly. They knew not however what suffering, what pain were; but it was as if they had a presentiment of it, and their most earnest endeavours were used, when they saw its horrible expression, to render help, and to alleviate it. If a poor worm crawled in the dust, hunted forth by ants, it was immediately released by their hands, placed upon the soft grass in safety where there were no ants. Whenever they saw a little bird which, accustomed to the freedom of the woods, with ineffectual flutterings struck its little head against the iron wire of its cage, the tears came to their eyes, they besought for its release; and if their prayers were indeed in vain, they put together their hoarded pence and purchased it. Then it went out in the field with the happy little ones. The door of its cage was opened; and when the little released one, amid exultant twitterings described circle within circle above their heads, then did the children clap their hands, and their hearts beat loudly with delight.

Not a day passed, on which they did not operate against something which was bad, or for that which was good. To be sure the sphere of the children's activity was but small, and that which they could do but unimportant. They were young artists, who early accustomed themselves to the beautiful and noble parts which they were later to play upon the great theatre of the world.

As for the nests, in the robbing and plundering of

which boys often find pleasure in the bold and cruel exercise of their strength, Edward and Ellna supplied provision. They laid this at the foot of the trees or hedges, where the little airy families had built their summer-dwellings. "The mother need not now fly so far," said they, "and her little ones need not wait and be famished!" They approached the places carefully, where the mother had bedded her eggs in the grass, silently scattered corn, and were very careful not to terrify the timid bird, which often by degrees, accustomed to the visits of the little angels, only flew off twittering, set itself upon a bush near, and waited quietly the going-away of the children, who joyfully, and not a little thankful for this proof of confidence, stole away so softly and lightly that the grass rose again under their footsteps as if it had only been bowed by soft breezes.

In order that they might not tread upon ants, which always streamed across the path on journeys of business, or upon frogs which hopped before their feet, the children remained standing, or made a little circuit. They never intentionally killed an animal, nor a fly, nor even a gnat, those *Parias* of the air, which find no mercy from the educated part of the human race. "It is really so delightful to live!" said the amiable little ones. I once even saw the little Ellna give up her white arms and hands as prey to these rapacious bloodsuckers. "I give them their suppers," said she smiling; "and—it does not hurt

me much," added she for the sake of her brother, who now, for the first time, shewed the somewhat imperious temper of the man, and forbade his sister to do this again, if she did not wish that he should extirpate the whole race of gnats, which probably did not seem more difficult to him than the conquest of the world to Alexander.

Ellna was obliged to submit. The gnats were chased away, and then Edward endeavoured by kisses to prevent the bitten places from swelling. The fresh smiles of childhood beamed from their countenances as they thus sportively contended, Edward to give kisses, and Ellna to avoid them.

I said that they never intentionally killed an animal, —I was wrong. If they saw a little creature tortured by the pangs of death, a fly or a moth, which had burned themselves in the candle, a trodden, but yet living worm, then Edward, as the least tender-hearted, hastened, with averted eyes and compassionate foot, the moment when pangs and pains would vanish.

"It is better to die than to suffer," said they, and turned away with pale faces.

"These children are too good for this earth," said those who knew them; "they certainly will not live long."

And yet, my God, it would be well amid so many pains, amid so much evil, if thou wouldst let these phenomena tarry longer here, which as it were

reveal again to us the stars of which we have lost sight, which gently and refreshingly remind us of whence we are come, and whither we go.

You good and amiable mortals—when I wish that you should tarry here, I do so for our sakes, and not yours! If the All-merciful call back again to his bosom these sparks of his spirit, which have illumed and warmed the unworthy earth for a moment—how well done is it of him, how good for you!

The May-day of childhood was passed for Edward and Ellna,—their youth dawned. They counted fifteen years.

Their child-like mind, however, was not much changed. The first violet which looked forth from under the snow; the first strawberry which was reddened by the beams of the sun, still called forth the purple of joy upon their cheeks; and the joy or the pain of their fellow-creatures drew from them now, as before, a smile or a tear. Only now they regarded more than formerly their fellow-beings as the worthiest objects of their care.

There was not within the compass of some miles a single cottage which they had not visited. The goodness of their mother gave them unceasing opportunities of enjoying the blessed pleasure of benefiting their fellows. “Tell us what you need,” said they to the poor and sick, “if we can, we will help you.” Now there was a softer bed; now more healthy food; now a little support in money; now a petition on

behalf of the indigent, which, always accompanied by gentle, kind words, spoken by two of the sweetest voices, made as deep as beneficial an impression. When help was not necessary, they sought at least to prepare a little pleasure; little presents were given to the parents, confections to the children, who of all the benefits most highly prize those which are conferred upon their sugar-loving gums; all these young lovers of noise and sweetmeats always attended on and saluted Edward and Ellna with loud cries of joy.

People warned their mother of the manner in which so much goodness might be abused. She replied, "Do not let us be too anxious. One single opportunity to do good which is lost, as is often the case from mistrust, is an irreparable loss. I acknowledge that we are often deceived by others from want of prudence; but with too much prudence we deceive ourselves. And then—if you only knew that which I feel when I hear every mouth blessing my children!"

If people would rightly thank Edward and Ellna according to their wishes, it were thus that they must speak to them: "I am now better, my pains are alleviated;" or, "I am now more joyful, and happier;" or, "God is good, he will not allow us to despair;" then were their hearts filled with the purest joy, and they thanked God.

In the mean time their happy endeavours, their charitable cares, were not extended alone to the poor

and the less educated classes of the people; they sought to assuage not merely the care which weeps, the suffering which expresses itself aloud, the silent sorrow, the consuming unrest, those small but insupportable afflictions which people do not willingly confess, but which are so painful,—all those adverse circumstances which hang like chains about the slaves of the polite and educated world, they imagined, and endeavoured with compassionate hands to lighten. One look, which in an unwatchful moment betokened a depressed heart,—one gesture, one movement, which betrayed embarrassment—a consequence mostly of uneasiness of mind,—seldom escaped their eyes; and they always discovered some means to make at least a few moments agreeable to those who seemed to be deprived of peace and satisfaction of heart.

When Ellna saw in society a sister-being to whom nature had dealt hardly, and who, in one way or another, seemed to betray the painful consciousness that she was unpleasing, she sought immediately to become acquainted with her; she went towards her, caressed her, and endeavoured in all ways to convince her that she found her loveable, and that she was gladly in company with her. Edward also came immediately to her assistance; and the attentiveness with which he offered a thousand of those little favours which one can never demand, but which are received with so much pleasure,—his unconstrained

lively politeness, — made, in connexion with the charming friendliness of the sister, an irresistible impression. If, on the other hand, Edward saw a youth who was neglected, or overlooked, or dejected, he always tried to get into conversation with him immediately. If they danced, he introduced his sister Ellna, who in the goodness of her heart preferred him to all the rich, handsome, and elegant young gentlemen who sought for one of her beaming glances.

How often have I seen countenances which betrayed minds depressed, displeased, or embittered, clear themselves up under the influence of the twins, and by degrees reflect back their gentle and beaming smiles. Plain features became thereby beautified, and one read long afterwards, in their more agreeable expression, “We can nevertheless be found to be amiable!”

One evening, at a dance in the open air, I perceived that Ellna had no longer a little bouquet, which her brother had made for her out of the loveliest flowers of the garden. I asked her whether she had lost it. “I have given it away,” replied she, reddening, and left me to dance at the same moment. I looked curiously around me among the young and loveable persons of the ball; no one had Ellna’s little bouquet. Afterwards I perceived, upon a bench which stood at some distance, a deformed, feeble being, whose limbs were all twisted; he held Ellna’s

flowers in his emaciated hand, and repeated softly, with an expression of devotion, "The angel!—the angel! she thought, she said, that flowers would do me good; yes, they do me good,—O what an angel!"

How happy they were, these young, so lovely and so good, brother and sister; how worthy of love they were, and how much beloved! People prided themselves on them in the whole country, just as they pride themselves on the gifts which nature has bestowed on the country or neighbourhood which we call our own, and of which we are so proud. People called them the angels; and, in fact, when one saw them, when one heard their melodious voices united in a simple song of praise in honour of the Creator, one could forget every thing else, and for some moments fancy oneself in heaven.

The tenderness which twin-children commonly cherish for each other, was so deep, so inward, between Edward and Ellna, that I fancy they had scarcely a notion of an existence apart from each other. They thought, they acted together; they always said *we*; they felt only their *I* in each other; this *I*, which, when it is felt quite alone in oneself, is so heavy, so painful a burden.

The beautiful life of the twins had hitherto flowed on without a cloud. No sickness, no care, no disaster, had cast one shadow on their pure brows. Life, which otherwise is so severe a teacher, seemed to hold her children in honour, and, for the first time,



as if she could not be stern. Each new day brought with it something to beautify them. Their countenances became more oval, and took ever more and more the lovely Grecian form. Their figures increased in more beautiful pliability, like two young trees which have entwined their crowns together. Their smiles were fuller of expression, and the goodness of their hearts beamed ever clearer forth from their large blue eyes.

People approached these favourites of God and men almost with adoration; people could have offered sacrifices to them; and yet, if one would contribute anything to their happiness, one must receive something from them. It was to me as if I saw in them young priests at the altar of Mercy, who imparted with humility the gifts of the divinity.

Their mother,—so much has been said, perhaps all that can be said in words, of maternal love and maternal felicity, but the love and felicity of this mother cannot be described by words, can, perhaps, only be compared to the felicity of the mother who saw the most holy glory of God around the head of her son.

At the age of sixteen, they stood in the full bloom of earthly, and at the same time, of celestial beauty. The world opened itself to them full of joy, love, and happiness. Before them lay a light, flower-strewn, peaceful way, upon which they could wander together, beloved and loving in return, happy and making

happy. They could be the benefactors and examples to their fellow-creatures; they could be so, and yet they could not,—at the age of sixteen they must die!

At the beginning of winter, Edward's Apollo-countenance began to burn with a hectic crimson, which kindled up and dyed his youthful cheeks with brighter red; but which, in the course of a few hours, faded like a feeble flame, and left behind the paleness of death. His strength began to fail, his beautiful slender figure bent forward like a tender young tree which has been bowed by the storm; his breath became short; his hitherto so ardent movements slow and languid, and his eyes had a clearness which promised the speedy lighting up of the whole being. The opinion of the physician was this—Consumption, and only yet a few months to live.

O now, how was every thing changed! As he approached the grave, Edward looked around him upon life, that seemed passed away from his eyes like his native shore from the sight of the seaman.

“I am so young,” said he, amid deep sighs; “and must die already! I shall leave thee, Ellna—must part from thee and our mother! And this beautiful life, this charming earth, good people, all, all must I leave, and die! O the dark grave, wherein I shall be laid alone—how horrible!”

Every thing that Ellna said and did had alone for its object consolation and alleviation for her brother.

And nevertheless she was so wholly unhappy; but she never thought of herself.

She said to Edward, "The sun has a wonderful power, my brother; come to the window, and let it shine on thee; see, here is a soft chair; here are lilies of the valley, which I have fetched for thee; enjoy their delightful odour; they send, especially in winter, presentiments of spring over all our feelings." Or she said, "Rest on me, my brother; thus thou wilt sit comfortably, and I will not stir." And with her brother's head on her breast she sate whole hours immoveable there, taking pains to keep time with his breathing, and to repress the uneasy beating of her heart. Another time she said, "Dost thou see how the clouds divide, how the heavens clear themselves up? It opens, as it were, and beams so mildly and blue above us. It is the answer of the All-good to my prayer, which I just now fervently put up to Him. The heaven of our happiness has dimmed itself—it will clear up again—thou wilt not die!"

Sometimes she sought also to awaken hope in his and her own breast, by jest and sport. She danced before him, threw playfully around him the light scarf which her hands wreathed in a thousand graceful forms around her own ethereal figure. She sang to him those little ballads and songs which life so easily takes hold of, and makes it also easy to those who listen to their attractive tones. But when only a feeble smile, a melancholy reflection of the former

blissful one, appeared on Edward's pale lips, then suddenly were extinguished all beams of hope in Ellna's eyes, and the twins wept together.

Often did she encourage him to make use of those means for the renewal of life's strength which, particularly in consumption, are resorted to, in order that the weak thread of life may not too suddenly be torn asunder. All these she prepared with her own hand. Who can number all that her inventive love discovered, to procure for him alleviation and amusement? Without the knowledge of her brother, she held her hands in ice-cold water, that she might afterwards cool his burning forehead as she laid them upon it. When she watched by his bed through sleepless nights, she read aloud to him, and told him such things as she thought would best please his then state of mind; for his state of mind was, as is the case with consumptive patients, unsteady and changeable. And in those gloomy moments in which Edward shuddered at the prospect of dying so young, and being alone; for he could not conceive to himself that he should not miss his sister in the grave. Then Ellna would promise to follow him. "How could I do otherwise," added she, "I really feel my life in thine!"

Yes, she could console;—and what woman, what true woman cannot? I ought, perhaps, seeing that I myself am a woman, to be more modest,—but if I believe it, if I express it, it is because I love,—and because, although I cannot turn aside the stroke of fate

from the beings who are dear to me, I have set the hope of my whole life on alleviating it. Yes, I believe it is *we* alone who can solve the enigma of pain in its least parts; and that it is given alone to *us* in the inspiration of feeling and of love, to have a presentiment of the evil which pain occasions, of that which is concealed in the gnawing disease of the sick. I hope and believe, and let nobody gainsay me, that as in the beginning of time, the genius of evil sowed poisonous seed in the flower-garden of creation, still that a mitigating balsam was placed by the All-good in the hands of woman, which could make the power of these less operative.

Ellna had said to Edward, "I will follow thee!"—and she soon followed him. The same symptoms of disease shewed themselves at the beginning of the spring in her, and the mischief made rapid progress in her tender frame, weakened by disquiet and night-watching.

To her the sentence of death was also announced by an honest and candid physician, who feared, above all things, to add new troubles to what was already incurable by fruitless attempts at recovery.

"We are so young, and yet we must, indeed, die!" said now Edward and Ellna, painfully. But this *we*, that united them, was already a drop of comfort in the bitter cup.

They took leave together of the flowers of spring, took leave of every day which unmercifully dragged

away with it a drop of their life's strength. People saw them often, as, supported on each other, they wandered about with feeble steps and sorrowful looks in the wood, in the fields, in the groves, where they had once played so happily; they took leave of every thing; of the earth, even of heaven, which seemed, however, only so glorious to them, because it arched itself above an earth which was a paradise to them.

"Farewell, every thing which we have loved!" said they, "we must leave all, we must soon die!"

When people spoke in their presence of future enjoyments, or of future good deeds, with the intention to amuse them, or, as it were, to enlarge the view, which an approaching night shut in ever more narrowly—they said, with tearful eyes, "We shall not be there; we must die!"

"Come to me in the autumn," said one of their neighbours, "when my grapes and peaches are ripe, and there shall be served-up to you an actual angel's entertainment."

"In autumn we cannot come," returned they,—  
"in autumn we shall be no more."

"Next month," said a lively old gentleman, who was their friend, "my grandchildren, Alfred and Signild, come to me. They are good and beautiful; not, indeed, like the angels, but, believe my spectacles and my heart, not far, not very far from it. Alfred shall be Ellna's husband; and the little Signild, who is the apple of my eye, Edward shall have for his

wife. Quick and merry, like the chain in the quadrille, shall all go on in a twinkling,—falling in love, betrothal, and marriage. And a little kingdom of heaven one shall then find here.”

“Ah!” replied the angels, sorrowfully smiling, “we cannot be married, we must really die!”

And in all ways, and from all sides, came this death towards them sternly and severely, forbidding and disturbing all joy, and changing every thing into twilight and night.

And yet they must learn to love this death, which appeared to them so fearful.

Pain—the condition of life, and the terrible side of life—which hitherto had not ventured to approach these angelic beings, struck now its hyæna-claws into their breast.

I had heard them say “we must die!” with an expression that bewailed “we must leave the festival!” Soon afterwards I heard them speak the same words, but in a tone which expressed, “we shall soon repose!”

Thank God, this time of suffering was of short duration; repose came before the grave, and only a slow, almost painless wasting away, led them unobservedly down to the shore of life, where they might still gather a few flowers.

In the mean time they had suffered, gained experience, and from before their eyes vanished the fading prism which had clothed the whole world with purple.

They looked around them, and the paradise had vanished,—they saw tears, crimes, sufferings, circumstances of terror, for the alleviation of which they stretched out their feeble hands in vain. Human misery, with whose signification they were now first acquainted, raised itself like a dark image of horror, and spread a veil of mourning over the whole beautiful earth.

“People suffer,” said they, “animals suffer; all that breathe suffer, or must suffer—it is not good to be here—this is the home of suffering!” and they no longer wished to live—except, thought they, to be able to console a little and to help. “But that which we can do is really so very little!” and a melancholy glance of thought embraced the globe.

About this time a good, enlightened clergyman began to give them instructions in the religion to which they were baptized. In their angelically pure souls sprang up the heavenly seed, and bore a hundred fold, as if in the good earth of which the gospel speaks.

Their looks brightened by degrees with the increase of the light within them; they were often, it is true, cast down upon the earth, and they sighed, “this world is not good!” but they soon raised them beaming to heaven in the joyful feeling, “there is a better world!”

The night which had encompassed them for a time, became ever brighter and brighter, and glorious was



the path which opened itself to them in the splendour of a celestial light. Thither they directed their looks, thither all their hopes, all their desires. Presentiments of eternity penetrated them, and as they looked upon each other with a blessed smile, they whispered, "we are immortal."

When they, for the first time, had enjoyed the holy communion, peace alone was in their hearts, and the beam of their eyes was only a faint reflection of their inward brightness.

One anxiety, one only one, remained to them still, and this often expressed itself softly amid sweet tears, when they knelt adoringly before the eternal Fountain of Life;" "O, our God," said they, "if thy love, thy power should sometime penetrate and surround us with brightness, like this glorious image of thee, how—how shall we be able to thank thee?"

So passed the summer, whilst the angels cheerfully and submissively, resigned day by day, flower by flower, the crown of life.

Autumn approached—with it, at the same time, the earthly transfiguration of the twins. The nights passed for them sleeplessly. When it was possible they passed them in the open air, where their oppressed lungs breathed more freely, and the moist coolness mitigated the fever that burned in their blood.

Whilst the August nights mildly and peacefully wrapped slumbering nature in mournful twilight,

there burned in the souls of the dying brother and sister the clear torches of hope and of joy.

I have heard them, those words; I have seen them, those looks, full of immortality — for which there already existed no longer any night. And afterwards, for a long time, every thing in life seemed to me pale and colourless.

Autumn was come. Feebly sank the lovely heads of the twins upon the cushions which were placed around them on the sofa, from which they were never more able to rise. Those who loved them, now counted the seconds.

Suffering themselves, Ellna and Edward sought, nevertheless, to comfort and to enliven the mourners whom they must leave. "We will watch over you," said they, "when we are angels,—we will entreat God for you."

They looked farewell upon all when they were no more able to speak; and when their weary eyelids closed, they blissfully smiled.

Towards the last, however, a troubling disquiet crept into their hearts. They feared that they might not die at the same time—might not pass away together to that home of light, of peace, and of joy, for which they alone longed.

Sitting near to each other, they watched with secret anguish in each other's countenance, the progress of the disease. "How brightly beam thy eyes," said Edward to Ellna. "Thy countenance has

no longer anything earthly in it. It seems to me as if thou couldst spread forth glittering wings every morning, and float forth into the clear heaven, far, far from me!" And catching her round the waist, he pressed her to his heart with all the power of his feeble strength. Another time it was Ellna who said with a trembling voice, "Edward, how sunken are thy cheeks, how dim thy eyes! Oh, look at me! look at me! Thy breath becomes weaker—it ceases! Let me give to thee of mine—I have yet enough for us both." And seizing the head of her brother with her weak hand, she endeavoured, amid kisses, to communicate some of the feeble breath of life which she felt in her own breast.

Thus did the dying brother and sister endeavour to hold back, as it were, each other, whilst they felt how they were rapidly led forward by a mighty, invisible hand.

Friends, acquaintance, all who had known and loved the angels, assembled around them. As if to an altar, every thing which people thought pleasant and gladdening, was brought into their sick room. They did not give them, no, they offered to them, as it were, flowers, fruits, together with heartfelt wishes—honest tears—which were received by the twins with grateful smiles, and this promise—"we will soon pray for you!"

They placed harps in the room adjoining the sick chamber, and often played and sung them into quiet

slumber. When people contemplated them in those moments when the soul had taken a freer flight into the spiritual land of dreams, wanting no longer time and space, but floating forth over wondrous lands, having a presentiment of their future free and beautiful existence—then they saw, in the indescribable expression of their calm features, that they were removed far, far from the earth, and that for them the eternity of bliss had already arrived.

In the evening, they sometimes said to each other, with gentle smiles, “Shall we wake to-morrow in heaven?”

During a tempestuous October night, sleep descended unusually quietly and mildly upon the loving angels. Counting every stroke of the clock, the mother and her friends watched in the quiet room.

“How well they sleep!” whispered they who ventured to speak. “It strikes twelve. See how they smile in delightful dreams! The morning dawns,—they yet sleep. The storm has ceased—heaven brightens—the day breaks beautifully,—yet they sleep. Hark! they sigh. Or was it the wind which passes the window?”

The sun ascended, caressingly shone the golden beams on the angel-faces of the twins. They sleep no longer. They were awake—but in heaven! Pure flames, kindled from the same spark, which had burned together; now also are they extinguished here upon earth at the same time!

They had been earthly angels, they are now heavenly; and when an unexpected consolation, an unexpected joy refreshes one who is troubled and cast down, he says, "*They* have prayed for me."

And their mother, their poor mother?

Do you see, by the wall of the churchyard, that female figure, which sits there upon a stone, as immoveable as it? Negligently fall down upon her shoulders locks of grey hair—the wind plays with her tattered garments. She is old and stiff, but not merely through the influence of years. Do not pass coldly by—give her your sympathy—she will not much longer trouble you. Look at her crutches, at her dimmed eyes, at the pain of her silent mouth. Why does she sit here? Because she cannot be anywhere else. She is where her heart also tarries, by the grave of her children. Grief for them has troubled the light of her eyes and of her reason. She does not observe how the leaves of autumn fall around her—she feels not when the winds of spring melt the snow upon the grave,—but every day she goes there, and the summer's heat and the winter's cold find her alike unconscious. No one whom she knows speaks to her, and she speaks to no one. She has, nevertheless, an object; she waits—for what?—for death! Through the course of many years has she seen the graves around her open and receive weary wanderers to their quiet peaceful bosom—but she still sits a dead one among the dead, and waits.

[April 1st.

Be ye saluted by me, mild breezes, which melt away the winter-snow; be thou saluted, bright spring-sun, which penetrates with warmth and life the dust of the grave! From the home of the dead, from the still churchyard, have I to-day saluted life. I love this peaceful place, where the unquiet, throbbing heart, where every thing, comes to repose. I also feel in a breast, which has not been able to wait the time, the unquiet captive, which now in pain, now in joy, throbs so restlessly and violently, and it does me good when I can think that a time will come, when *mine* also will be among the reposing hearts.

The larks sang in the clear air above the trees, on the grave of the twins. There sate, as before, the mother still and immoveable upon a stone. A whistling wind passed over the churchyard, I saw a shudder thrill through her frame. I approached her, she bowed her head against one of the lime-trees on the grave, and still smiled. I saw with joy, that also her time of trial was at an end—that she waited no longer!

You beautiful flowers of the spring, now where the May sun calls you forth out of the renovated earth, cover and brilliantly adorn the grave, which will no longer be moistened with bitter maternal tears!

Lovely lilies of the valley, soft periwinkle, grow upon the hillock—

“Even as the scar grows over the closed wound!”—*Tegnér*.

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THE SOLITARY.

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## THE SOLITARY.

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WE have many a time seen in a sterile wild spot, a lovely flower standing alone, surrounded and secluded there by unfriendly circumstances, ardently, but vainly seeking for the sun, in whose light thousands of her happier sisters rejoice themselves, but which the barren overhanging rocks will not allow to force its way to her. Becoming pale and powerless, the flower, by degrees, bows to the earth the head, which was created to be raised upwards, and at last conceals her evanescent being amid the gloomy circumstances which are guilty of her fate.

One eye, which has accidentally discovered the Solitary, rests upon her with a sort of pity, whilst thought inquires to what purpose, and why she stands there so without joy to herself, and joy to any one? These involuntary hermits of the world of flowers have their prototypes in a higher sphere, and something of these I expect to recognise in the one whose hand

has penned down the following thoughts and features of a life not enlivened by many sunbeams.

It is no direct diary, no witty and interesting journal, that she has written,—ah, such are never written, except in the quiet hope, that a confidential friend will sometime look through the lines which preserve the remembrance of our fate and our feelings, will sigh over our cares, rejoice over our joys, smile over our witty sallies, love and hate with us, in one word—feel with us, and thereby become more intimately united with us;—No, her unarranged thoughts were like withered leaves, which the autumn wind shakes from the trees and strews over the earth,—even as they are the offspring of feelings, which in no beloved breast on earth may hope to find echo more.

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*May 17th.*

It is spring! From my window I see the clouds, chased by fresh gales, like glittering swans sailing away in the clear blue; yet above them I see the eagle soaring higher and higher forth into the path of light. Ah! that I could do as she!—would that I could feel warm life-dispensing spring air! How narrow and cold is it within here, how fresh and glorious there in the distance, where the crimson of morning stands! I would—ah, know I indeed rightly what I would?

Secret and mysterious yearning,  
From the soul's unfathomed depths, -  
Like a misty form ascending,  
That is chased by quiet winds,  
Floating in the farthest distance,  
Thou dost draw me far off, far off,  
Towards the undiscovered shores!

Over life's rose-flowering gardens,  
And her verdant groves of hope,  
Thou dost lead me, and enfoldest,  
In dark grave-clothes, all the earth;  
As the soul which, from home-sickness,  
Wasteth in a foreign land,  
Where it sees no single flower.

On my mind with might thou seizest,  
And dost call forth plenteous tears  
From a sweet and unknown sorrow;  
And my heart, ah, how it beateth!  
Will break forth from out its prison,  
Will come forth to light and warmth,  
Longing for another home!

There, where from the flaming orient,  
Gloriously ascends the morn;  
There, where in the western cloud-land,  
Sinks the golden torch of day,  
Yearns my ardent soul to flee;  
There, my urging spirit drives me,  
Over land and over sea.

Eagle, which so proudly soareth  
To the golden sphere of light;  
Fleecy cloud, which gentle breezes  
Bear into the boundless space;  
Tell me, in the far-off distance  
Is it all so bright and glorious—  
Reigneth freedom there and peace

Would I might, O bird, speed with thee,  
On the fire-path of the sun!  
Cloud, with thee that I might float forth  
To the evening's purple shore,  
And on gentle islands pillowed,  
Full of joy no tongue can speak,  
Sing there my own cradle-song!

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Thus I cried. Down to his eyrie,  
From his flight the eagle flew:  
In free space the cloud had vanished.  
Lonesome stood I. And the wind played  
With my wailings, as if sweeping  
O'er a sad Eolian-harp;  
And in empty air they sounded,  
Without echo, without answer!

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I have heard speak of ice-palaces, and I myself  
live in a moral ice-palace. The Count and the  
Countess, my gracious patrons, are statues of ice;  
and I, I am a poor flickering little flame, lighted in  
one of the lamps of the saloon of the castle, which,  
by degrees, is going out, from frost and icy-breath.

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O it must still be indescribably delightful to feel,  
to love, to live; in one word—to love.

I have, however, never loved anything else but

my own fleeting ideal. Never shall I be able to see it realised upon earth!

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I am to-day twenty years old. Who troubles themselves about it? Who offers to me a flower in my flowering-time? Ah, if nobody rejoices because one has been born, one might very well wish that it had never been so.

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I would willingly purchase the caresses of a father and mother with my life. He who has never experienced their innocent delight, has been shut out from the Eden of childhood.

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When I read in novels and plays, of children who, when arrived at mature years, have found again their parents whom they have long considered as lost, I sympathise with heartfelt emotion which carries me out of myself. I exclaim, "Father, mother!" open my arms and weep — and yet I know that mine sleep for ever.

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All the people whom I know have something in the world about which they interest themselves, to

which they attach themselves. They have parents, they have children, brothers and sisters, relatives, friends, or, in necessity, a dog, a cat, a bird; in short, some sort of creature for which they live, to which they are useful, and which requites, with devotion, the care and tenderness that is shewn to them. Or they have an occupation, an object; in one word, a something which enlivens the present, and opens the future.

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I wonder very much sometimes, for what purpose and wherefore I was born. If I were to question the Baroness about this, she would reply: "To sew for me, to be at hand when I ring my silver bell, to assist me at my toilet, to make of an evening the fourth at my card-table,—and besides this, to exercise my patience." Good heaven! am I too proud, if I think such an object mean and miserable?

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Some people have an interest in life, which I do not envy them—namely, to quarrel with one another. That is the pleasure of the Count and the Countess, as soon as they meet for the day; or I fancy that they seek one another only to give each other this refreshment. In one thing only do they agree, and that is, to reprove me severely for the least error.

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If I were placed by fate in a condition to rule over others—for example, in the place of the Countess—how would I carefully avoid severity and sternness in the reproofs and corrections which I found it necessary to give to my servants and dependents, especially to those who lived in my family! Their negligences would in the whole be so trifling to me, in comparison so wholly insignificant; because, even if they did occasion me a little inconvenience,—yet they could neither disturb the peace of my heart, nor cost me painful tears,—nor depress and molest my temper; whilst, on the contrary, my severity all too easily could make the faulty person feel all these evils. It is one of the great problems of life, not to occasion suffering to others, and even the most subtle syllogisms cannot find an excuse for those who have wounded the heart of a fellow-creature. For their own sakes also, those who have power should be kind and considerate towards their dependents. People may be often better served in trifles when they are more feared than loved; but how small is this gain in comparison with the loss, as is shewn in all accidental important occasions. Then the devoted servant soon shews himself as a friend, and he who is obedient out of fear as an enemy.

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To play at cards every evening from seven o'clock till ten with three persons, who like the Count, the

Countess, and the old President M——, incessantly quarrel over their game and their counters (for we do not play for money), is a mortal pastime. The kings and the honours are to me actual murderers of pleasure. This evening occupation makes me feel still more intolerably how the whole day is for me like the ——

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Poor little bird with fettered wings! In vain thou attemptest to soar away—thou escapest not—thou feelest for what thou wast created—thou wouldst, like thy fellows, bathe thyself in the pure, sunny atmosphere; like them sing thy airy freedom—and thou art fettered to the dust. Painful, painful is thy condition. So also is the condition of him who, with the ideal of perfection and felicity in his breast, bound by the fetters of mediocrity, yearningly goes about, yearningly strives, combats, wearies himself, hopes and despairs, and at last sinks down beneath the immoveably burdening hand of fate. With a thousand noble powers of activity within his soul, he sees every way to self-formation and usefulness closed against him ——

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Impatience is a painful feeling. In order to suffer less, let us be patient.

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If I could only do good in some way I would not complain. But I can—do nothing, nothing. In order to be completely captive, in addition to the walls of a prison, one must be a woman, must, like me, be poor and dependent. I know that in this respect I have many sisters of destiny in the world. O my poor friends! how gladly would I be able to console you! But, ah, I also am a fainting pilgrim in the wilderness,—I would extend to you a refreshing draught—and have not one drop of fresh water for myself.

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When a person has deeply felt one single affliction, he understands all other sufferings.

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I see two pictures, two sides of life—as unlike to each other as day and night are. On the first, what life, what pomp of colouring! The altars of love and of domestic happiness stand there garlanded with eternally fresh flowers. Beneath the shadow of laurels and palms, the fine arts exercise their delightful play, and drink freely, from the glorious, richly changing world which surrounds them, the nectar of inspiration. The sciences take their pleasurable, peaceful way to sunny heights. Every thing lives, moves, mounts upwards, goes forwards, becomes clearer, purer, more significant. From order, beauty and the dominion of the great whole, every lesser

part enfolds itself in the fulness of life, of grace and freedom. Nothing is mean, powerless, and heavy. On the contrary, all is great, rich, and points to immortality. Even misfortune has glory; it has its honour, its song of victory. The lightnings of the tempest, and the quiet magnificence of a bright sun, light up alternately the scene, and lend to it constant majesty. The second picture—behold a gloomy, misty autumn day,—behold weary wanderers, who, upon a wild, stony heath, seek for a resting-place. They would make a fire to warm themselves by, but a still, icy penetrating drizzling rain extinguishes the flame, and at last, even every glimmering spark in the ashes. Behold wretchedness become so wretched that it loses compassion for itself; behold how misfortune hardens the unfortunate against others, who are as unfortunate as themselves. Behold disgust, life-weariness,—behold—ah no, rather behold it not! close, if it be possible to thee, thy eyes, thou whose life resembles this picture. Mist and clouds that whirl above us,—ah! sink deeper down, and conceal from us the horrors which surround us, and our desolate, awful path.

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Year after year goes on slowly. To me they are all like gloomy autumn-days.

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Reproofs? for what reason? I do not deserve them. I complain indeed not. No expression of discontent, no murmur escapes my lips. I am thankful for the maintenance which is given to me (out of charity they say). I am obedient, submissive, I endeavour to fulfil all which is required from me. But I am not cheerful, they say, not merry; I always let my head hang down. Ah, if I must look cheerful, let them give some joy to my heart! I have, however, in order to please those to whom I owe obedience, studied before the glass, that I might find out the look which would give to my countenance the most cheerful and contented expression. At last, I am obliged, in contemplating these mournful, compulsory smiles, to weep right bitterly.

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I read lately in a book, a sort of treatise on moral health, full of good advice against the sickness of the soul: "if thy condition be too oppressive, and thou feelest thyself unhappy in it,—then change thy condition." Would he indeed be unfortunate if he could do this?

Ah, I am of genteel birth, and the proud, distant relatives who, after the death of my parents took the orphan in the cradle, have the right of parents over me, although they have never shewn to me their tenderness. Still, however, they have placed them-

selves as such. I must either submit to them, or be ungrateful,—I have no other choice. Besides this, where could I go?

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Marry—and marry M——? Never! I am not romantic; but esteem and friendship I must be able to cherish towards my husband, if I would find a shadow of happiness in marriage. M—— is avaricious, has a hard heart, and is always in ill-humour,—qualities which are intolerable to a wife who has a heart. Besides this, he seeks not a friend in me, not a true companion in joy and suffering, not an affectionate wife—but only a housekeeper—and some one who will bear his ill-humours and his oddities without murmuring. And I should take such a husband, only to get married—never, never at all! I am too good for that,—I feel my womanly worth too well, and never can nor will (let others do what they may) regard myself as a piece of merchandise. Most cordially do I compassionate those who, in a condition like mine, only to change this, accept of offers which are good in the opinion of the world, but which in reality are wanting of what is most necessary to a happy marriage—namely, all that can ennoble the heart and make it happy. Sooner or later the blinded ones discover that they have only exchanged a less suffering for a greater one.

Ardent, warm souls must find in marriage the supremest happiness or misery.

I must hate all that is mean and contemptible. I feel that I should hate M., and know not how miserable and contemptible I myself might not in the end become as his wife. I recollect having read some verses of Haug, which, with a little alteration, may be turned to my thoughts.

HE.

Oh women, ye were angels to the lover,  
And now are devils when the wedding's over!

SHE.

Why thus it is, is not so hard to tell,  
That which appeared a heaven we find a hell.

In the original, she is the complainant, and he gives the reply. But that which one sees every day is, that a bad, immoral man, ruins the character and the temper of his wife. People accuse many women of falsehood and craft, people deplore the same faults in certain oppressed nations. The answer to the one and to the other contain, at the same time, the explanation and the excuse:

“We have had tyrants for our masters.”

Before I would be obliged to excuse myself in such a manner, I would rather preserve unchanged my joyless uniform life to the end of my days. Life is really not so long.

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A year is passed since I wrote these words, "Life is really not so long." Ah, life, nevertheless, is long; its minutes seem eternities when one suffers, when one is pressed down with life-weariness. And must we not become so, when every thing resembles an eternal *no* to all our wishes and our wants?

I feel it deeply. In order to endure life, an affectionate heart requires the love and tenderness of his fellow-creatures—even as necessarily as meat and drink for the sustaining of the body.

O the heart that is condemned to throb for ever unresponded to! Hidden existence, which gave motion to it—in mercy let it cease to beat!

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People should never contend about the misfortune, about the pain which others feel. We suffer in such different ways, and from so many different kinds of causes; we are so dissimilarly organised, and the relations of outward circumstances to our inward, our feelings, our capacities, are manifold and so various, that it is almost impossible for one person to judge of the condition of another. Where, also, we see suffering, we should reverence it, if we are not so happy as to be able to alleviate it.

Not long since, I heard one knowing female friend admonish another, less knowing, and yet less fortunate friend; "Thou hast, indeed, committed no

crime; thou canst not feel remorse; thou hast, indeed, no cares; thou hast clothes and maintenance provided for thee. About what, in all the world, needest thou disquiet thyself? Thou fanciest thyself only to be unhappy; chase away thy diseased thoughts, and thou wilt become as cheerful as me. Everybody has their cares. Perfection is really not promised to us on earth. One must use one's reason, and drive fancies out of one's head, as other people do."

The friend who was comforted in this way was silent; but looked, spite of it, more dejected than before. In her place, I should have answered, "It is true, of all the evils which thou hast named, I know none; but my unhappiness, therefore, is not the less real—it lies here in this weak, diseased heart, which I did not give to myself, and which painful gift heaven has spared thee. But precisely for that reason thou canst not judge me; and it would be just as consequent to deny the possibility of my headache because thou dost not feel it, as the pang of my heart because thou dost not understand it. Thou—but to what purpose can a longer answer tend, where my knowing friend would only shrug her shoulders? I will rather undertake in thought the part of comforter, but perform it in a different way. I would go to the sufferer and say, 'Rest upon me, we will weep together.'"

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M. has been married for some time. His wife is very unhappy. I hope, however, that her rapidly-increasing illness will soon release her from the horrible life which awaits her in an unhappy marriage.

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I cannot devote one moment of the day to reading. The Countess cannot bear that I should read in her presence. For that reason I spend one or more hours of the night in so doing, and these are the only ones which afford me any enjoyment of soul.

Many a gentle word, rich in consolation, has in these hours been spoken to the solitary forlorn-one by pure spirits, who have understood in their sensitive hearts all the suffering of weak humanity. Especially rich in consolation are these words, because they say to the unfortunate, "I understand thee!" It is to one, as if bewildered in a horrible desert, one heard all at once the beloved tones of a friend's voice. Then I often stretch forth my hands to the home of the noble departed, and exclaim, "O friend, thou who hast felt with me—hast suffered with me—send down for my refreshment a breath of the eternal rest which is now become a part of thee." But, ah! no tranquillising breath comes to us from the land of spirits—and perhaps also no eye sees from thence. I believe, too, that it is well it should be so. In order to be perfectly happy in another world, the glorified must be withdrawn from the view of misery.

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But, ah, if the same voices, which are silenced in death, yet so piercingly exclaimed, “We suffer!” could once whisper to us from the opened clouds, “We are comforted!”—how much fewer bitter tears of despair would flow.

Ye dead! it may be your business to console mortals.

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Why are there in our country no religious communities like those, which in other countries offer to the unhappy, who need them so much, respectable, sacred places of refuge? They might, indeed, be so well instituted that they would in no way oppose the laws of our religion and of sound reason. They might be what they should be,—sacred asylums for the unhappy, the forlorn,—for the erring who, repentant, wished to turn back to goodness,—for all those who from one cause or another are isolated in the world, who live without a determined object, without activity and without joy, and who thereby become every day more unhappy and less innocent.

All these should come together and form a great family, which, guided by wise laws, devoted itself exclusively to the purpose of honouring the Highest in the most agreeable manner—namely, by affectionate, active assistance to all necessitous persons, all such as are unjustly dealt by, all who are forlorn and unprotected;—which object of this great family, that for the

most part would probably consist of indigent persons, would only be obtained by united and prudently directed powers.

Here, those without relatives and friends would knit among themselves the holy and affectionate bond of the heart, and would find, mother, sister, and friend,—would by their side, and in noble emulation with them, clothe and instruct the neglected child, tend the sick, comfort the mourners,—in one word, might so live each day, that in the evening they would be able to say, “It was not lost.” Here might she who had gone astray turn back to virtue and to God, begin a new life and a new happiness, might feel the peace of innocence and the encouraging joy of virtue. Here might the unhappy one who is embittered by the world and man, find a home full of love and gentleness and good spirits, whose harmonious voices would soon pour peace and rest into the wounded heart. Here might the noble one, who in a brilliant sphere had felt her heart contracted by the nullity and the misery of the great world, descend, and, in the peaceful shades of a quiet, but useful life, become really great. The ardent, the passionate, to whom nature gave the soul of Alexander, and fate gave only fetters, whose eccentric power consumed themselves and others, would here let their flames burn upon the altars of devotion and benevolence, and feel in the joy of voluntary renunciation that the thorny garland of a saint is a loftier, a more

beautiful object of endeavour, than worldly greatness, than the world's song of praise, and that renown which yet reaches not to the stars. Here might all those who by nature, by fortune, or by the world, have been treated with severity, be embraced as by a heavenly mother, who, full of mild seriousness and pure love, would lead her children by a quiet, happy, and virtuous life to the eternal home, where love, truth, and felicity first meet with their prototype. O beautiful and blessed life—noble institution—innocent charming dream—would that it could sometime be realized!

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I have sometimes a feeling of bitterness, which I seek to overcome—of envy, which I seek to destroy in its first shoots. But ah, how much does it not cost to preserve oneself good and gentle, when daily and hourly a thousand trifles, like pricking needle-points, irritate to displeasure and indignation. Neither should I have strength to be so, if many a time a single prayer for strength and patience did not lend it to my breast,—if many a time the reading of a good book did not call forth observations in my soul which elevate it above the nothingness of this world. But ah! it sinks again.

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If I might, however, only breathe a little fresh air. The sun shines so magnificently—the air is so clear—the snow so white! O if I could for a few minutes be in the country—see the dark green woods, and hear their southing—could speed across snow-covered plains—breathe of the clear light air;—in one word, could see free nature and feel myself free—how happy I should be!

---

Had not illusions, the enchanting, deceitful syrens, filled the ardent fancy of my ardent childhood—had I not desired so much from fate—then I could better have endured that cold life which is become my lot. That early novel-reading, how much poison it lays in young minds! What young girl of seventeen, that is only gifted by nature with ordinary attractions—that has a warm heart—and what heart is indeed cold at seventeen!—and has read novels, plays, and romantic poems—does not see, with entire certainty in herself, the some-time heroine in a novel, a poem, nay, even in a tragedy? The death of a tragedy-heroine is so fearfully beautiful, so sublime, so admired, so wept over, that it appears quite enviable; and sometimes the young reader weeps with indescribably painful joy over herself and her sublimely moving future fate, in the girl murdered by the hand of her lover.

Now steps the young girl out into life, and expects,

with strained impatience, to see it move around her full of love, full of great and beautiful actions, and rich in sentiments and events; and finds, often only what I have found, poverty in every thing; and could almost fancy that a hostile fairy had suddenly changed the enchanting magic palace into a horrible, fearful prison.

Her brilliant, varnished morning dream, has embittered to her the whole day.

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If I were an instructress, I would, above all things, endeavour to defend my young pupils from that which, in the beginning, could excite and heat the imagination. I would endeavour to prevent, in every way, their adorning life with flowers which it did not possess, that they might be able some time to gather the few which it actually has. Therefore, my little friends, you must labour early to exercise your young powers upon that which lies near to you, and is useful and good within your sphere. When you are become older, you must labour still more and truly with attention and zeal—must never dream over life, but must use it, and at the same time enjoy it. Many grown-up people resemble the child who wept because it could not have the moon,—these are they who have early begun to seek for their happiness in the clouds.

---

Often, when I hear tell how one or another has met with a joyful change or an unexpected piece of good fortune—when I see how spring follows winter, and makes it forgotten; how sunshine succeeds to rain, calm to tempest,—there awakes in me too a joyous feeling, and I think, “All things change; all things upon earth change, like the earth itself; also for me will there probably some time be a change too. Hope is a fountain, whose secret and hidden veins well forth eternally in the human breast.

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But when I hear of disappointed hopes, of wishes never fulfilled, of prisoners for a life-time, then my courage sinks, and I ask myself why should it go better with me than with others?

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Sleep, ye feelings, wishes, hopes—sleep, and leave me at rest!

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To lose interest in oneself, and in all that surrounds one, is to be sure sad, but yet at last it is always a kind of rest.

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You say that the country is beautiful, that life

there is pleasant, that you are happy, that you are beloved. I believe it—I believe it; so much the better for you, but what good is it to me?

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No! and should I also feel my privations a thousand times more deeply, still I will not, I could not become cold or indifferent to the happiness of my neighbour. O love, enjoy, and rejoice yourselves! Let every thing, to the very smallest worm, pant with joy, and only I, I alone, possess nothing, I will praise thee, God of goodness!

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*He* too, who seems to me so great and good; he, that worthy image of God upon earth—may he be happy! would that I could purchase for him, by my life full of renunciation, a life for him full of affluence and heavenly joy!

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And how? should I then indeed be unhappy!

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Since I see him, hear him, some changes have taken place in me. The air is clearer—lighter.

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Why does my heart beat when I hear his step, his voice even at a distance? Why do I become so painfully embarrassed when he approaches me? Why do I feel my cheeks burn?

---

His countenance is proud but gentle; his whole being full of a noble consciousness; it shews itself in his bearing, in his gait, in his unconstrained and graceful movements; one sees, one feels, that he has the consciousness of making by his exterior an agreeable and respect-inspiring impression, and precisely on that account he never thinks about it—and on that account it operates so certainly. The forehead is lofty and free, the eyes flash with fire and brightness, the nose is easily and lightly arched, —in all his features, in his whole department, is revealed the development of a free, powerfully, beautiful nature, which has only sought through the outward a significant expression of the inward. Freshness and life pervade his conversation as well as his countenance, and when he speaks, one feels that the fires of truth and goodness which sparkle in his eyes, dwell also in his soul. His voice is sometimes, perhaps, too strong and loud for the tone of conversation, but it raises itself upon the fire-pinions of thought and of feeling. It proceeds from a breast in which no single feeling is stifled or fettered. It is the voice of free-



dom, and seems made to speak for her. Thus nobly, thus beautifully gifted by nature and fortune, ought he not also to be good? Yes! he is good—good as I image to myself the angels. This eye, which so coldly and calmly can see danger and death approach, that glances with such defiance and scorn on tyrants and voluntary slaves—this eye has also tears of sympathy for the sufferings of a child, for the quiet pain of a woman. And should he not be good when he is so superior, so admired, so beloved! Elected to be king, he might perhaps forget his crown!

By the side of this glorious image I have, for the sake of the remarkable contrast, placed another, and contemplated now the one, now the other. This image, which is related to the first, like the shadow to the light, is my own. My deportment is dejected, it betrays the condition of my soul. My movements are, especially in his presence, often constrained and childish; this proceeds in part from the consciousness of my few charms,—in part from silly shame, which infuses into me a stupid vanity on account of my dress, which is almost mean, in comparison with that of others in my condition of life. I venture to speak but little, and when I speak my voice is low, and my words are often certainly inarticulate, because they have been accustomed to be silenced so severely; perhaps also, because his eagle-glance rests so attentively upon me, and he bends himself forward to listen to me. My eyes—earlier they had fire, ex-

pression, and animation, were clear and blue as the heaven—now they are feeble, without colour and expression—they resemble extinguished flames. Earlier my countenance had life and freshness,—now that gray-yellow colour, which indicates my past life, has spread itself by degrees all over it, and has chased away every grace. I could formerly laugh—I have forgotten how. My smile is melancholy. It is a pale, autumn-like sunshine, which speedily hides itself in dark clouds. Wearied by perpetual labour, and combating against the ever growing desires after a brighter and more friendly life, a certain indifference and coldness has by degrees overcome my soul—I have lost interest in myself and my own fate. I have by degrees carried my hopes to the grave, and every one has taken with it something of my life into the grave.

---

He is good—too good! Like the sun which rejoices with its light even the smallest flower, he wishes by his fire, his fresh spirit, his cheerfulness, to enliven even me. But ah! the most beautiful sun cannot bring again life to the flower which, already withered, has sunk its head to the earth.

---

He is very well read, has travelled much, has seen much, heard, perceived, and thought; it is, therefore,

not to be wondered at that his words are rich in meaning. When I have quietly listened to him with rapture for whole hours, it is to me as if I heard beautiful music, whose pure changeful melodies open to me an inner world full of rich infinite feelings.

Besides this, every thing, as well what concerns things as ideas, becomes to me clearer and more distinct, as if in a dark gloomy picture gallery all at once the day burst in and lighted up the pictures, the subjects of which I before had only darkly imagined. And if he turn himself to me whilst he unfolds his rich noble ideas, and full of goodness inquires, "Is it not so? do not you think so too?"—then he reads, probably in my eyes, my quiet admiring answer.

---

He spoke yesterday of his childhood. He has been caressed by father and mother; he was carried about in their arms, upon their hearts; and I!—when I was a child, when I became older, now even, always—always was my caressing hand, my loving heart, repelled. Well then, rejected and yet proud heart, cease to proffer thyself yet farther; and if thou must love nevertheless, break amid thy own throbbings rather than betray thyself, rather than place thyself in danger of being anew rejected, despised —

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Quiet nights, why do ye no longer vouchsafe to me peaceful beneficial sleep? And thou, my heart, why dost thou throb so?

---

A certain agreeable consciousness awakens sometimes in me. I am then not so mean—not so altogether insignificant in the eyes of another! He shews me esteem, nay attention; he places value on my judgment; he encourages me to cultivate my talents: but that is done only out of goodness, out of heavenly compassionate goodness. God bless him!

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It is too late, too late, merciful passer-by. Dost thou not see that the frost of many nights has lain upon the plant? Never again will it raise its head.

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My daily prayer,—that which gives to me the greatest pleasure, is: “O God, give to him every thing, which thou hast found it good to withdraw from me!”

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What joy, to pray for those whom one loves! What joy it is for me, to think, that my feeling for him should assume the form of a guardian angel, to turn from him a danger, to lead to him a blessing!

---

But never, never shall he suspect how much I have loved him! Never shall he direct to me a contemptuous, pitying glance! It would be to me a dagger-blow!

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I will burn these papers, my only confidants; and my heart shall be the quiet grave of my feelings.

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O death! merciful death, why comest thou not? How delightful to me would be the wafting of thy refreshment-bringing pinions!

---

I have had to-night a strange, but beautiful dream. It seemed to me that I walked in a garden full of flowers. It was spring; the birds sang, the heaven was clear, the air mild and pure, all was beautiful around me—but I did not feel myself happy. I wandered softly along, and looked towards Alfred, who walked in the same direction with myself, but upon another path, separated from me by a little stream, whose silver waves sprang forward one over another, and whispered, “How charming, how charming, it is to rock upon cool waves!”

And I was obliged to repeat for myself, “How charming, how charming!” Alfred also looked

incessantly towards me, and it seemed to me that our looks by degrees began to beam.

All at once he went down to the shore, and stepped into a little boat which floated across the stream, and suddenly paused at my feet. Alfred reached forth his hand to me to enter. I would not, and wept, I knew not rightly why. Then he took my hand, and drew me with gentle force near him in the boat. I wept still, but felt myself not unhappy.

Then began the boat, as if guided by invisible hands, to move itself, and rocked lightly and pleasantly down the stream, whilst the silver-waves splashing leapt around it and sang melodiously, "How charming it is, to rock together upon cool waves!" I wept no longer.

Alfred and I talked with each other, and that which we said enchanted us. We floated softly away under balsamic-breathing flower-arches of lilachs and roses. The flowers loosened themselves from their stems and fell down upon us, whilst voices from them whispered, "How blessed it is to love one another, and to be united!" and we repeated amid joyful feelings, "How blessed!" Then came the night, but a night without darkness, for all the flowers began to shine in their bright colours, and every wave looked upward with a little bright shining diamond in its point. Above our heads floated a light cloud, from which beamed millions of stars. All at once Alfred said, "See there the grave!" And before us I saw

something dark, formless, horrible, into which we were hastily driven. I felt, however, no fear. Then something like the wafting of a wing touched our eyelids, and we slept. But our sleep had lovely dreams, and we ceased not to see one another. Then it was to me, as if a gentle kiss was pressed upon our lips, a kiss like that with which a mother awakens her sleeping child, and we awoke. A beaming morning-red surrounded us. We held one another by the hand, and ascended ever higher and higher into an atmosphere of rose-odour. I felt my being light and ethereal. Every particle of heaviness, of depression, of discomfort, was vanished; I felt it was for ever. In a sea of crystal clearness, which lay below us, our figures were reflected, and I saw myself so beautiful that it enchanted me; "Now, for the first time," thought I, "I am worthy of him!" In the midst of the transporting feeling of a pure and increasing joy, stole suddenly the thought through my soul, "If all this should be only a dream, and I should wake no more in dream, but in reality!" Ah, truly, all was only a dream. I perceived all at once the cry of the night-watch. "The clock has struck one!" and the bell of the Countess which called me to her. The Countess fancied she heard a mouse in her sleeping room, and would allot to me the part of a cat, which I perform extremely unskillfully.

Great misfortune enhances the powers of the soul; she mounts up to heaven from the flames of combat. It is an apotheosis, although upon the wings of the tempest. But those hourly depressing, consuming cares and disagreeables, those vexations, the cancers of life and of joy, O how do they not oppress the children of the dust—yet deeper into the dust!

---

I had just now a moment of quiet satisfaction. What was the cause of it I do not rightly know. I was alone; the sun shone into my little chamber; I felt its warmth with pleasure; the shadow of a budding lilac played in the sunshine upon the green wall. I thought upon him—on his goodness. I observed a little cloud, which at some distance from the sun floated lightly by, and said to myself, “Thus will my life creep on! Yes, ephemeral being, soon wilt thou be no more, and thy pain, thy love, will leave behind them upon earth just as little trace as this little cloud in the blue field of heaven. I shall be no more,—suffer no more. Peaceful thought!”

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I am in the country! For the first time in many years, and that truly through his kind mediation, I find myself in a good, cheerful, and in every respect



amiable family. Here constantly assemble themselves the people of the neighbouring residences. They play, sing, dance, talk, and laugh, the whole day long. I am dazzled, like one who comes out of the darkness and suddenly is met by a strong sunlight. Even as the eye then experiences pain, so does my heart now. I am not ungrateful,—but I feel myself solitary; I am not happy—and never shall be so!

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I am a dissonant tone in the joyous harmony which rules here; that I feel in myself most of all.

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Seldom have I seen so amiable, interesting a person as the twenty-years-old Camilla. She and her good sisters endeavour to cheer and enliven me in every possible way; but they are—ah, they are too joyous, too happy! they are innocent children of the light; they have not had a presentiment of the mystery of pain. I have endeavoured to fall in with their amiable labours; but my smile has perhaps not been right joyous, and one of the tears which I often feel to fill my eyes has perhaps, against my will, rolled down my cheek and been seen; or my deportment, reserved, through habit, repels them; in short, I see that they are not at home near me, and feel

themselves restrained in their innocent animation; and they would certainly leave me to my own mournful self, if they were not prevented doing so by their goodness and politeness.

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Ah, what has the owl to do among the larks? Terrify and silence their innocent songs? No; it is better that it return to its own dark nest.

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My name's day. I had forgotten it. Camilla and her sisters surprised me with flowers and songs; they crowned me with flowers, embraced me, besought me to be gay,—said that they loved me. Amiable, merciful Samaritans, if indeed your anxious labours cannot heal the wounds of the sufferer, yet she will never forget to bless you for your goodness.

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He reproached me with gentleness for my reserve. He wished I would seem joyful. I will attempt it.

---

Last evening, Camilla sung. He stood behind her chair. When she had finished, she turned herself

half round, looked up at him modestly blushing, and asked—"Was not this the piece which you wished for?" I did not hear his half-aloud spoken reply, but I saw his beaming eye meet hers which she cast down. Why did she cast it down? Beautiful, graceful Camilla! Look up gratefully to heaven, if thou perceive that feeling in his eyes which I read in thine.

---

His looks follow her. That is not to be wondered at. She is a rose in her full bloom, lovely, good and joyous. He gave her a nosegay lately of heliotrope, and a bee crept out of the flowers and flew to me, who sate at a distance, and stung me in the hand. I repressed with difficulty an exclamation of pain, but yet I did it. I would not have disturbed the two at any price, they looked so amiable and happy. I can give no joy, but neither will I disturb any.

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And for that reason I must very soon return to my gloomy home. That is now more suitable for me.

I have endeavoured to give him a pleasure. I have arranged and adorned Camilla's brown hair, which of all the attractions that she possesses, is the one upon which she bestows least pains. I have succeeded.

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He is ill! and I cannot approach him—not watch over him!

---

He is better. Tears of anxious pain, tears of joy, which I was unable to keep back—ye have betrayed me! But thou, Camilla, dost thou think that thy paleness, thy red eyes, have remained unobserved?

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He entered, we suspected it not; he seized our hands—thanked us for our anxiety, our sympathy. What I did I know not; but Camilla saw that I trembled.

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Yes, I will hence—to hide myself from him, from the whole world, from myself!

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I am again in my former home. It is better for me here,—I fancy that here I am stronger.

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He must know it—he has seen that which he is to me. And then? Should he know it always. He would not boast of it in vanity—for that he is too great, too noble! He would mourn over me; his

pity would not be heavy to me to bear, like the pity of the world. I should regard it like the compassion of a higher spirit, which looked down upon a weaker being.

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Wherefore comes he to visit our joyless house, to enliven it with his presence? It is done from compassion for me;—does he think that I could not live without his glance? Oh, he deceives himself! Life can as it were nourish itself with renunciations.

---

Or perhaps he foresees that when he is separated from me, I shall find myself doubly solitary, and seeks now to strengthen my soul, that I may bear it? Therefore he comes again—therefore he speaks—in order to raise me to the strength of mind, to the repose which he himself possesses.

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Therefore he exercises my voice, encourages me to cultivate my understanding, to seek for knowledge. But in my condition that is impossible; and besides this, how could it benefit me—will it make me happier?

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Yes; I understand him and his angelic goodness. He has seen that he also was appointed by heaven to strike a wound into my heart; he knows it, and sought to prepare me for it; he would, if possible, alleviate it, make it imperceptible; he will divert my thoughts, will prepare pleasure for me—ah! he knows me not!

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He is too good! It seems to me as if he pressed the dagger only deeper into my heart; but he knows what is best for me—and I kiss the hand which gives me death!

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Ah, why so much kindness to-day, if he will set off to-morrow?

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He has asked my hand—heavenly powers! He and—I!

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I have refused his hand, with thankful words; but decidedly have I refused his hand! My heart beats with pain and proud delight! I have refused it, because I love him better than I love myself; his happiness I prefer to mine a thousand times, and could give him no greater proof of this, than that I would preserve him from a wife who is not in a condition to make him happy. Ah, I must weep!

---

Would not death by the side of life throw over this its dark shadow? I will be just towards myself. I am not in every thing unworthy of his choice. My life, my heart, are pure—and this heart loves him;—my soul glows for truth and virtue,—I am not conscious of one mean feeling—but ah, for the rest how little am I formed to beautify his noble life! My outward youth is vanished, still more so my inward. This spring of the soul, which sometimes however can recal the early withered flowers of the other. All my eager lively talents are chilled and dead. It is always to me as if there rested a heavy, stiff, iron hand upon my breast. I have felt too deeply the desolate emptiness, the gloomy melancholy of life. The bitterness of certain moments will never leave my memory. Never shall I regain that mood of mind, that freedom from care, which causes one to laugh so heartily—to be joyful,—in one word, to forget the future in the present hour. How bitterly should I have felt by his side—adoring him as I now do—my inability to give and to receive pleasure. I should, like Abbadona, feel my inward darkness, and thereby become still darker.

My health is weakened, and I greatly err if my chest is not affected.

Besides, what should I be in those circles where rank, mind, and talents, as well as his own inclination, call him, with my small education, my wholly inward poverty, my want of agreeable properties;—a despised

nullity, and a being whose audacious pretensions would there, where she is not in her place, make her appear with justice an object of ridicule. A wife without charms, sickly, melancholy, and who, because she felt all this, became thereby yet more dejected; that would be the sweet reward which fortune would have given for his magnanimity; that would be the only comfort for his pains, for the enlivening and joy of his life! Ah, he would hundreds of times have repented his choice in his own heart! And the kinder, the more considerate he might have been towards me, for that reason should I have been all the more unhappy. Yes; I feel that, pressed to his heart, out of the very despair of not being able to make him happy, I might have murdered myself. O that thou whom I so inwardly, so infinitely love, couldst but read my heart! Would that my constant, my warm prayer might call down upon thee that happiness which I cannot give thee!

He has never loved me; no spark of love conducted him to me; only for a moment could I deceive myself about it—the dream vanished—all became clear,—I saw what I had to do—and God and my love lent me strength to act properly.

It was only noble, heavenly compassion which led him to me—only goodness,—it deserved to be rewarded! A sweet, proud feeling overpowers my heart, when I think, “the noblest man would have raised me up to himself,” and I have treated him worthily! Yes; he has raised me!



I cherish in me the belief, that the charming Camilla will, at one time, vouchsafe to him all that which it was not in my power to give. Pale, trembling Camilla! perhaps very soon will the flowers of joy and love glow upon thy gentle cheeks. Thou never shalt learn for what thou hast to thank me. And thou, Alfred, when the joy of heaven swells in thy noble breast, thou wilt no longer think of me; but I—I will think on thee.

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And when I have finished my laborious course through life, may I then be able to say, “I have made two human beings happy!”

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I see him no longer. How dark is every thing around me here! but I have willed it,—and I am contented.

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My thoughts accompany him with benedictory wishes,—day and night, in the morning as in the evening, accompany him.

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My presentiment is about being fulfilled. Camilla is Alfred’s happy bride. How will her lovely intellectual eyes beam! O may they be happy! Hear

me, Giver of all felicity—no supplication for myself shall longer weary thy goodness,—but make them happy—take every thing which I might yet have—ah, take my soul—and give, give to them all!

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Let Camilla love him, even as I love him.

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The bells ring! the bells ring! the great day is arrived—Alfred leads Camilla to the altar. How noble, how handsome he is! How lovely, how charming she,—how happy they both appear to be! “A noble pair,” whispered the people,—did I hear it—or have I read it somewhere? I do not know. The day is beautiful—the spring-sun warm and bright. All is bright and peaceful, my mind also,—I am happy and cheerful! No, it is not fever which colours my cheeks so crimson—it is joy—it excites my pulse—it makes my heart beat a hundred in a minute—hark! the bells ring. It is done; the clergyman has blessed them—and I too.

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Now I am tranquil and alone, and quiet as the night, which reposes on all things; I pray in my heart for the happiness of those whom I so infinitely love. All that Providence does is good, is well—

even pain has its repose, its end — my pain also will find this in his happiness; for which I in a courageous moment laid the foundation. O beloved of my heart, I believe, I know, that through thy happiness, I also shall be happy. When the sun of thy joy beams in its full splendid midsummer glory, its warmth will also reach to me, the one hidden in shade. I will be the distant echo of thy song of joy! Feel and call thyself happy — and — I also will be happy — be joyful! and I also am — joyful; smile! and also I smile; thank God! and also I thank God; thank him inwardly.

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(Poor fanatic! thy wings seem not long to have sustained thee. Under a later date, I find in the same hand which wrote this in joy and felicity, the following words, all the expressions of a quiet but broken spirit).

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*January 2nd.*

My life is a feverish dream!

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A better world — my most beautiful, my only hope!

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(Years seem now to have passed on in which nothing is indicated; but from that which next follows, and with which a new epoch seems to have begun in the life of the Solitary, one may conclude that the angel of peace—whose palms, sooner or later, wave around the good, innocent sufferer—came nearer to her heart).

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An infinitely sweet something has sunk into my heart. I know not what sentiment of peace, nay, of cheerfulness, attends me in my quiet wandering through the vale of life. And yet every thing around me here is unchanged, is cold; without joy, without love, as before. The change has taken place in myself. I expected my happiness from the world—and man; I was deceived, wounded and repelled; now I have alone turned myself to God, and begin to feel—that His peace is higher, greater than all the joy of the world.

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A beautiful hyacinth, which blooms in my window, awoke in me cheerful feelings and thoughts. I see how it, unconsciously paying homage to the light and warmth, by degrees turns to the sun. The sun in return beams brightly upon it; opens, still operating, flower upon flower; lends to it colour, beauty, and fragrant odour. This to me is a clear image of the

human and the divine. Eternal sun of love! I will, like the flower, humbly turn to thy light, in order to receive life and joy from thee, which thou alone canst give.

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I come from church. I have wept much, and am yet become happier. The feeling of devotion is one of the most beautiful, most charming, which we can experience upon earth. It is not joy, not sorrow; but something that elevates us above both,—it is a momentary return of the soul to its true native home—a feeling which, more than every deep-thinking demonstration, convinces us that we are children of immortality.

The text was taken from the Woman of Canaan. The preacher took occasion therefore to represent how bread is often withheld from us that we may learn to satisfy ourselves with the crumbs,—and how a submissive and flexible spirit is productive of happiness to its possessor, and well-pleasing to God. It seemed to me, as if all this was emphatically spoken alone to me, and I acknowledged it as truth in my heart. Ah, this restless heart, that has desired with impatience so much from the world and from man, that wished so ardently to possess all the good things of life, how it has been obliged to give up its wishes! It has, by degrees, learned to please itself with the crumbs; but it is also humble, patient,—and as I hope

has become better,—and now first it enjoys the peace, the joy, after which it has striven so long, but in the wrong way. A flower, a bright day, an unexpected kind word—a lovely dream, a feeling of satisfaction, yes! a thousand little enjoyments, formerly not regarded by me, of which even the life most wanting in joy is not wholly deprived,—are now infinitely dear to me. I have by little and little learned to see how the true wisdom of human life consists in this, that it, like the bee, knows how to suck a drop of honey out of the smallest flower.

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And if thou, lofty Director of my destiny, hast left me thus solitary upon earth for this' purpose. that I may turn myself wholly to thee, and in thee find my all,—have I then, indeed, ground for complaint? If thou, All-merciful, wilt be to me father and mother, brother and sister, must not I then consider myself as blessed?

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Why, ah why, have I not earlier sought my peace where I could alone find it? How many years of pain and depression might have been spared to me, if I had earlier known how foolish it is to turn oneself for comfort and joy to the world and man.

Give, thou solitary forsaken one, thy heart to God; but with that deep serious will, which allows of no

wavering, no return, no weakness. Learn to say, "Thy will be done, O Father!"—not merely with submission, but with love, with joy; and all despair, all depressing, hopeless pain, will for ever have vanished from thee!

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When I in the evening lay myself down to rest, and the fatigues of the day and the unkind treatment of those for whom I have borne them have depressed my mind, I begin to pray "My Father!"—but scarcely have I said these words, scarcely has the feeling of their meaning penetrated my soul, than I weep the sweetest tears, and an infinite blessedness overcomes my whole being. My whole prayer then often consists of "My Father!" which I repeat many times; for they contain, as I feel them, every thing which I can express of childlike love, of inward confidence, of submissive hope, of devotional joy. Amid such feelings I fall calmly asleep,—and is it then indeed to be wondered at, if I believe myself cradled by the songs of angels?

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Yes, I believe it—I must believe it—there is a comfort for every thing. There are beings more unfortunate than I have been, although the sensibility of my heart has increased suffering a thousand-fold

for me. There is, for example, the neglected invalid, consumed by pain; the captive, without hope of deliverance, of whose only joy—a spider—an inhuman hand has deprived him. But could not they also look up to God, and say “Our Father!” And the criminal, who has deserved his sufferings—who is more unfortunate than he? But if he feel repentance he may be forgiven,—the prodigal son can arise and go to his Father. Can the child of an eternally good Father ever, indeed, feel despair? Ah! He who taught us to call God our Father, He alone knew the human heart, and knew how to give to it a never-failing consolation!

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The dead have comforted the mortal; and the voices which have exclaimed, “We suffer!” have also exclaimed “We are comforted!” The Gospel is spread out to the human race, and has opened heaven to it; but a murmuring, dissatisfied heart knows it not.

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But the vicious—the debased into animal rudeness—the millions who live in darkness, in the night of misery and of ignorance? Friendly stars! ye who shine so brightly—mystic lights of heaven, full of hope I glance up to you. Ye are worlds for hope—



I regard ye as higher schools of education for the unhappy children of earth! Yes, confidently may one hope, God is indeed so all-good!

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If our faith is firm, and our hope secured with a sure anchor, then is much won for our peace, and, in particular, heaven stands clear in our future; but, nevertheless, our hearts may still suffer much, and the burden of the day still appear intolerable, let human wisdom help it as it may. Defend us from discouragement—from the phantasmagoria of the imagination; and let us seek, every one for himself, the diversion of mind, the available little joys and springs of comfort, which lie so near to us, if we only look out for them. The great object is to preserve oneself good and pure, and then to suffer as little as possible. The means for that purpose are for all equally alike as different; but no one will miss them who has only his eyes open to see them.

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Mercifully to direct the blind to them, ought to be the business of those whose lot it is on earth, so to say, to be eyes to the human race, to see for them and to teach them to see. O ye wise, ye noble and enlightened of the earth, be less of our schoolmasters,

be more our comforters! Shew us the mysteries of consolation—give light to pain—teach every one how in his outward condition, and according to the nature of his inward, he may find alleviation for his sufferings! Noble physician of the soul, grow not weary in seeking out remedies for all her maladies! How many blessings then will follow your footsteps, your divine labours!

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The years which I formerly found so long, now pass on rapidly as swallows, because the days no longer appear burdensome to me,—because no hour of the day passes over without affording to me a cheering, enlivening feeling. This hourly, this to me principal comfort, I have found in prayer, in a constant remembrance of the presence of the Highest of Beings. I live and act always under the eyes of a father; and as I feel that I live, I feel and know also that his eye follows me, that his spirit is near to me, surrounds me with his peace, and infuses a joy into me which I may indeed feel but cannot describe.

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I regarded myself formerly, by virtue of my position, as wholly useless in the world. Experience, to me dear experience, has taught me—that if we work, in the small sphere which has been confided

to us, only with truth and care, that we shall operate and labour according to the regulation which is the foundation of all good; and that pleasant consequences will sooner or later arise to us therefrom.

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My health fails. The fulfilment of my duties in the family which has adopted me, becomes to me more difficult every day; but I endeavour to fulfil them according to the best of my powers. My heart has peace, is cheerful and quiet.

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“Do not sit idly there, and do not look so happy, whilst I go about to seek for my snuff-box!” said just now the angry Countess to me. I recollect a time when I received reproaches on account of my downward devotional looks. Now my heart is so joyous that my countenance often receives the impression of it. Neither was the displeasure of the Countess at this time wholly without foundation; because, whilst one must take heed not to disturb the peace of others by an evidence of our own disquiet, one must not the less avoid shewing a satisfaction which may make a painful impression upon those to whom this feeling is a stranger.

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I have again seen—him—her, have pressed their children to my heart! This family is an image of felicity. The happy husband and wife scarcely recognised me. That was not singular—I am so changed. I cherish in myself a wish—a fanciful hope—which I will not chase away—the hope of being able soon to float invisibly around them, and watch over their happiness.

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How beautiful is the look of a man who labours with his full powers and in a sphere where his abilities freely exercise themselves, and still rise higher by the labour,—and where he is conscious that he lives for the benefit of his country, that he is esteemed by his fellow-citizens, loved by wife and friends, worshipped by his children,—that is the look of Alfred! How charming and touching is the expression in the countenance of a woman where all the requirements of her loving heart have been fulfilled, who lives in and for her beloved,—that is the expression of Camilla's face. And you happy little ones—you children, you darlings, one sees in your eyes full of innocence and joy of life, who brightly—the heaven of your childhood shines!

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“In the autumn—when the leaves fall!”—said a

physician to-day, half aloud to the Countess, after he had observed me with thoughtful mien, and had inquired after my health. This termination of life sounds quite romantic,—but yet my life has had very little resemblance to a romance. Well then,—in autumn!—in autumn. An aspen-leaf, which has trembled in the waving of so many winds—will tremble no longer!

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I make use of a remedy for my chest,—may it or may it not be beneficial—I am calm; formerly I wished to die—now I wish it less, since I have learned better to support and employ life. I have learned to worship God in all his works. There is nothing, be it small as it may, to which a great thought does not in someway unite itself—and which thereby does not become important and interesting.

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The leaves fall—and I still live—and still lift joyfully my eyes to the gloomy heavens.

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I have great bodily pain—and yet suffer so little—my soul is so happy!

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“In spring—when the leaves shoot!”—says the

physician now. And I should almost believe it, if I ventured to listen to the quiet presentiment which abides in me, and which whispers to me; in spring, when every thing awakens to life and to joy, when the flowers send forth from opened cups their fragrant odour to heaven,—then will my emancipated spirit float forth and feel the air of the eternal spring; then will my yearning have reached its dimly divined of goal.

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He is come to me with his wife, yet once more to see me—that was noble and kind of him. I found him changed. A dark fire was in his eye, and wrinkles which resembled those of discontent shewed themselves sometimes on his brow, that formerly was so clear and smooth. Ah, ambition has crept into his heart!—this, together with his talents, has lifted him upon eagle-pinions to the height of worldly greatness. He is become a great man, but has ceased to be happy. His amiable wife looked dejected, and the most careful toilet could not conceal the change in her melancholy countenance. It grieved me to see her;—ah, that they were but as happy and tranquil as I!

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I am almost forty years of age. As solitary as I lay in my cradle, thus solitary stand I yet on the

edge of the grave. I have gone through life like a shadow, and my life has been like a shade. More and more it vanishes from my eyes; but the Eternal Father, whose will I have obeyed, opened to me a new, a glorious life, to which I advance with indescribable joy! The beneficial prayers which I send forth, and which I feel will be heard,—the feeling of a presentiment of heaven, that feeling of angelic peace which has accompanied me,—the tranquillity which no pain is able to disturb,—the delicious emotions of joy,—the pleasurable tears which I often shed,—oh, those dear holy messengers!—what do they announce to me other than that I soon shall behold the image of all love, of all perfection,—that the yearning spark will soon unite itself with the sacred fire from which it is sprung!

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Here the feeble hand ceased to guide the pen,—the heart which had beaten so long with love and pain now reposes.

The Solitary is gone home to her Father—she is now happy!





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THE COMFORTER.

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## THE COMFORTER.

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WHO that has suffered—that has, in moments of deep and dark pain, found in his heart a world of misery, and then felt the necessity, cherished the heartfelt wish, to be comforted by a being from a higher world—has not, at times, hoped in enthusiastic melancholy to see an angel come down, who with merciful healing hand would touch the wounded heart, and solve the dark riddle of life and suffering?

Oh, when nature smiles around us in her glorious garment of summer,—when she, like an enchanting beloved one—affectionate, beaming, warm, embraces with pure joy man, her bridegroom,—then, if the human heart remain cold and reserved, and solemn as the grave;—if it alone cannot mingle its voice in the jubilant chorus of the earth,—if man fancy himself to be the only repulsed one,—how good were it then if a voice from heaven whispered the assertion to the unhappy one, “Thou also art

beloved! Son of suffering, endure with patience; thou also shalt one time drink from the cup of happiness!"

Ye bitter sufferings, inconsolable sorrow, despair—I have known ye! Heavenly voice, full of mercy and comfort, I have heard thee, and shall never forget thee. Yet to-day callest thou to me from the world of spirits. My soul hears thee, my heart understands thee! At this moment, in which memory has opened the leaves of my book of life, and my pen will recal the remembrance of long flown times, the still night has laid all around me to rest. I am alone, awake, and with me it is suffering which dissipate repose. The pale light of my lamp makes me aware of the shadow of a fearful form upon the wall near me, which reminds me of that which legends ascribe to the gnomes, those children of dust and of darkness. This horrible shape is my own—is my body. And this, so deformed, so heavily afflicted body is united to a soul which adores the beautiful in the inward being, as well as in the outward form.

Alone with myself and my shadow, surrounded by night and silence, I yet feel the smile float upon my lips,—I listen with quiet joy to the harmonious voices which rise up from the depths of my soul in humble offerings of praise to heaven; and I can only compare the delightful, clear peace which encompasses my soul, with the gentle moonlight that at this moment spreads itself over the moss-roses in my window.

There was a time when every thing in me was quite otherwise, in which I hated the world and myself; in which I wished that I had never been born.

In the May of life, during those days of spring in which the whole of organized nature, every created existence, becomes partaker of some drops of joy; in which gentle pinions rock mankind, and heaven vaults itself so loftily and brightly above us,—at that time I became acquainted with misfortune, and bitter were then my complaints.

It was in my drooping soul, as in the outward world, when, in our northern climate, the days towards winter rapidly decrease, the nights become longer, and the sun, like a dying one, seems only to rise, to say farewell, and then to sink again. I cherished not the hope that a new year would alter for me the course of things; on the contrary, I saw behind the decreasing light a night becoming ever more and more dark, spreading itself over all.

Happy are the dead; they suffer no longer! Happier still are the unborn, who have never suffered! Happy also are you, ye pitied fools; ye who laugh at your misery; ye who plait for yourselves crowns from your straw couches; ye who dream that ye are great and happy. Ye are pitied unjustly! Ah, ye feel, indeed, nothing, and your misfortune is concealed by the flowers of your madness. Happy are ye!

Thus thought I, thus complained I, as one evening I dragged myself along with slow steps, in one of

the darkest alleys of the park on the estate of my parents.

I was young and unhappy, and never—no, never—can one feel misfortune so bitterly as in youth. In maturer years the feelings become blunted—the blood flows more tranquilly; one is already accustomed to suffering—the way is not then so long to the terminating goal of all suffering. But when pain surprises us in youth, then that which is terrific in its novelty is increased by the yet uncurbed strength of the feelings by which that wild, fruitless struggle against fate is excited, whose consequences are hopelessness and despair.

Sickly and infirm at nineteen, I went through life timid and gloomy as an unblessed shade. I had been happy; therefore, I now suffered so much the more. I was full of life and health till my seventeenth year,—and so beloved—and so happy! Then I felt myself good, found the world so beautiful, regarded mankind as angels, and God as the Father of all. A tedious illness threw me about this time upon the couch of suffering, from which I arose again disfigured in the most fearful manner. People pitied me at first; but soon they turned away from me — my mother also, my brothers and sisters, did so. My heart became bitter; I felt the deterioration of my mind, and began to think myself abandoned by God and man. The careful education, the fine accomplishments, which, in my younger years, had been my share,

served now only to sharpen the sense of my misfortune. Never beat a heart in a human breast with more glowing love for freedom, activity, and the heroic virtues, which history displays in splendid prototypes. Never flamed more enthusiastically the spirit of emulation in the soul of a youth. Cato, Brutus, Scipio, Regulus, they were my prototypes—I wished to resemble them, if not to excel them all,—and my name, like theirs, should be honoured by a noble posterity. Renown and joy, with a rich, virtuous, and useful life,—that was the quickly vanished dream of my first youth.

Miserable compassion, contempt, forgetfulness—with a useless, sickly, joyless life—were the horrible realities which locked me in their iron arms on my awaking, which drew me down from my heaven, and darkened to me the whole world,—and God, and his beautiful sun, and his mercy towards his creatures.

Doubt, with its murmuring never-answered questions, arose in my soul, and midnight darkness inclosed my uneasily throbbing heart. An unending pain agitated my breast, whilst the panting breath moved it up and down.

“And how have I sinned that I should be so severely, so fearfully punished—for what have I become so unhappy?” asked I, loudly murmuring, as with tearful eyes I looked around me on the blooming scenes which richly and beautifully surrounded me.

It was a gloriously fine evening. The sun was

descending, all was tranquil—only a low murmur stole now and then, like a whispered declaration of love, between foliage and flowers through the wood. Every thing seemed to rejoice—I alone suffered! I wished to be the bird which thoughtfully twittered, swinging upon the green branches, — or the flower which beamed so splendidly, which gave forth such sweet odour, — or the butterfly which rested in its bosom, — nay, even the moss overgrown, happy, senseless rock against which I leaned; — only not man—only not the suffering, pitiable human being which I was!

I rested myself beside a lake which bounded the park, and which was encompassed by the most beautiful shores.

O how often had I formerly, with youthful pleasure and joy, guided my little boat over its dancing waves! How often had I, with my powerful arms, divided its gentle waters—kissed them with warm lips—and seen in the clear depths which mirrored back a cloudless heaven, the image of my pure heart, my fresh life! As formerly, still green, riant shores garlanded the quiet lake,—as formerly, the dark blue of the heavens reflected itself in its depths—my boat lay on the shore,—every thing had remained so unchanged, so kindly unchanged! I only was no longer like myself, was no longer the same. I found every thing here, excepting only myself.

I bowed myself down to touch the cool water with my glowing lips, but suddenly drew back at the sight



of my own detestable image, which, like my demon of misfortune, raised itself towards me more terrific than ever from the dark depths. It was to me as if I had been stung by a snake.

With disordered and painful feelings, I fixed my stony gaze upon the opposite shore. Joyful human voices sounded thence; and I soon perceived how gay couples swung around in a merry midsummer dance. Songs and laughter echoed back from the rocks around. I arose, turned myself away, and went deeper into the wood.

Through the opening of an avenue shone opposite to me the brilliantly-illuminated windows of the castle of my parents. They held there that night a festival to celebrate the return of my eldest sister to the paternal house. She had left it in her childhood, in order to be brought up by near relations in the capital; and now returned back an amiable bride, and was received by festivities which I now escaped as earnestly as I formerly had sought them.

“Nobody will miss me, nobody will think about me,” thought I, with bitter feelings, as I went away to seek for darkness and quiet. “Parents, brothers and sisters, make for yourselves pleasure—dance—sing! I shall never more sing, never more dance, never more laugh!”

Music now resounded from the castle, and brought to me the bewitching tones of my favourite waltz,—the joyous voices from the shore became louder and

louder,—I went, and went, and went,—they pursued me. O all ye unfortunate friends, ye who like me have felt yourselves without joy, without hope in the world—was it not then, during the innocent joy of others, that envy and bitter chagrin crept into your hearts? If it be painful to suffer undeservedly, then it is doubly painful to be obliged to say that one has deserved it, when one, for the first time, detects in oneself an envious and disdainful state of mind. I cannot describe what a feeling of infinite pain overpowered for some moments my whole being. My whole power was concentrated upon one point—upon the consciousness of my suffering. It was intolerable to me. “O my God! comfort me, comfort me!” exclaimed I many times with a hollow voice, before which I myself shuddered. “If thou be the God of mercy, then pity thou thy suffering child! Give me again that which thou hast taken from me; or open thy heaven—send an angel to me, an angel which shall tell me why I suffer,—or annihilate me! I am a grain of dust before thee—mingle me with the dust—only cause that I cease to feel, to suffer!” This wild, incoherent prayer—ah, I felt it—was only an audacious, bitter murmur. I should have thrown from me at this moment every earthly consolation, I should not have received them. An angel’s voice alone, an immediate revelation, would only, so I imagined, give me tranquillity,—could only give me back my extinguished hope, my faith on that which once had

been so sacred, so certain, and so clear, and which now to my feeling, unstable, and wrapped in darkness, left me without any support.

Every one who, like me, has been suddenly and unexpectedly plunged into the depths of misfortune will feel with me. People could not be so unhappy if, with the loss of all earthly hopes, they did not also often lose faith in a wise and merciful God. That gracious voice which exclaimed to us that not a sparrow, much less one of us, falls unobserved to the earth—that the hairs of our head are all numbered—this voice is not perceived in the tempest of passions—and if even it do find a way to our breast, it is not always able to silence the excited waves—for that wild, impatient heart desires then an instantaneous effect to prove its truth,—and if in our murmuring no consolatory feeling descends into our tumultuous heart—if our fate do not change, our sufferings remain the same,—then we despair—then—ah, how unhappy are we then!

With eyes fixed on the night I went onward, and seemed to myself like a child of the night.

All at once as it were a hundred weight fell upon my heart, that what I suffered, what I felt, might be only a repetition of that which others had felt and suffered before me. The bloody sweat of millions of human beings, the tears of millions, had moistened before me the path of pain upon which I wandered, and would moisten it after me; and shuddering, I saw

in thought, like ugly ghosts, darker than the night which encompassed me, all the sufferings and afflictions of the human race pass before me—the sufferings of the body, of the heart, of feeling, those never wearied harpies, which leave not the unfortunate, until he has, brother-like, extended his hand as a skeleton to death,—and in my own name, and that of all sufferers, I lifted up a piercing, painful, murmuring cry, and directed my eyes lamentingly to the stars. In tranquil, undisturbed majesty, they stood clearly sparkling above my head, and this immovable order, this eternally unshaken repose of heaven, awoke in my breast, ice-cold despair. “Let us die!” exclaimed I in thought to my brethren in misfortune, “Let us die—then all is at an end,—we have no compassionate Father in heaven!”

I had seated myself, and felt with gloomy satisfaction how the dampness of the night penetrated my dress;—I hoped that it would undermine my enfeebled health,—and my only wish now was for death. Whether it would conduct me now to a more friendly fate, or only annihilate my afflicted being, it was welcome to me, dear to me, and inwardly longed for by me. Nobody would weep for me,—all my family would, like myself, regard my death as a gain. I knew it, knew it only too well!

Towards midnight the music was silent, and I heard how the dancers on the shore departed by degrees, amid cheerful sounds. All at length was still. It had

become dark, and the stars, whose glittering pomp had seemed to mock my pain, were wrapped in clouds. The whole country lay hidden in deep night, and at a distance the thunder was heard to roll. All this accorded more with my inward feeling, and did me infinite good. I threw myself down upon the ground and wept bitterly. I wept long, and felt thereby a beneficial alleviation. Gentler feelings pressed into my heart, and combatted against the bitter ones. The thoughts so precious to me of a reward on the other side of life, for sufferings patiently endured, of a wise, all-compassionate Father came again and again. I was now able to pray to him with a submissive heart. I prayed,—prayed for consolation—for light and strength, with that fervent, nameless prayer, whose strength opens heaven, and seems able to press with the sighs of the heart, to the throne of the Eternal. I had, whilst I prayed, raised myself up, but soon sank down again to the earth, enfeebled by my feelings and by pain, deprived even as much of thought as of power, and dull tones of lamentation laboured forth from my panting breast.

The night was warm, and so tranquil that no breath of air was sent forth; yet it seemed to me at times as if a trembling passed through the leaves of the poplar, under which I lay with my face to the earth, and each time an involuntary shudder passed through me. Three times, it seemed to me as if a hand passed over my head lightly and caressingly, and

with the pleasant sensation which I perceived therefrom, a delightful remembrance of my childhood livingly awoke within me. So had Maria, the little beloved one of my childish years, caressed me, when we, fatigued by sport and exercise, rested upon the soft grass together. I had perceived this sensation, when the little one raised her feeble hand from her death-bed and laid it, for then she could no longer speak, as it were in blessing on my head.

Was she near to me at this moment? Was she, the glorified angel of earth, sent by the All-merciful to comfort me? O how my heart beat as these thoughts arose in my soul!

I believed with certainty that something supernatural was near me, but, although the hair of my head rose upright, yet my heart felt no fear. What, indeed, does one fear when one is deeply wretched? Nay, even the most gloomy revelations of the spiritual world terrify no longer. The feelings of horror which they infuse, are welcome; they refresh—they raise us above earthly pain; and seem less horrible than this. It is, however, a consolation which, as we believe, approaches us in a beloved shape from that unknown land at whose portals all lights of the human spirit are extinguished—therefore all becomes tranquil in the tumultuous breast, and all the pulses beat in adoring expectation. Thus operated in my soul the thought of Maria's presence. I called her softly by name—besought her to lay her hand upon

my heart,—and amid feelings of peace and sweet repose, such as I had never felt before, I fell into a kind of dreaming stupefaction. During this, it appeared to me that I saw Maria clothed in white, and indescribably beautiful, sit near me, in her hand a palm-branch with which she fanned me—whilst I, in no condition to speak or clearly to think, pleased myself for some moments only by the feeling, how well it was with me. All at once I perceived Maria seize me by the hand, and amid feelings of indescribable satisfaction I fancied myself floating away at her side over the earth towards heaven.

“I am dead!” thought I, and an unspeakable sensation of joy passed with the thought through my soul.

I wished to turn myself round, that I might yet once more behold this earth upon which I had suffered so much—but mists dimmed my view.

The clouds environed me ever more densely; I felt how the frosty damps chilled my breast, and dulled the glow which the restless beating of my heart had occasioned. “It is good!” thought I; “that is the enfolding of the grave, the embrace of death—how beautifully they cool! soon—soon shall I be transformed.” Again it became dark to me, as if I were not yet dead, only dying. My mind became every moment more benumbed; it became ever darker and darker before my eyes—a dull sougning, as of distant woods, was in my ears. Yet clearly and calmly

remained to me the consciousness of a guiding hand, even in the moments in which I entirely seemed to lose the consciousness of my own existence.

A sudden feeling of pain, which thrilled through my heart like a dagger-stroke, recalled me to thought and consciousness. I found myself lying upon the earth as shortly before, and should have regarded all as merely a dream had I not still felt the soft, warm hand which inclosed mine. I was feeble and powerless. Without raising my head, I exclaimed, "O Maria, why didst thou not take me up into thy bright home? Why am I yet upon earth, where people suffer so much and so hopelessly—why, ah, why must I still suffer?"

"God wills it," replied a voice, as charming and melodious as we represent to ourselves that of angels. Impatiently murmuring, I asked, "And to what purpose should I live and suffer?"

"In order to be better thyself—to be useful to others."

"How can I, miserable worm, be useful to others?"

"Through thy patience—through the example of thy submission."

"Ah, I have strength to feel my suffering, but not to bear it!"

"Pray!"

"God's image is darkened in my heart—I cannot pray! I have seen the abyss of pain—have understood the sufferings of men,—and I see—I understand



God no more! O be not angry, pure, holy angel! Thou who livest in light—look mercifully upon the son of darkness—enlighten me—comfort me!”

“Yes, I will comfort thee!”

“Tell me, compassionate angel, has the Eternal sent thee to me?”

“He has sent me to thee.”

“His eye thus, then, sees the tormented worm creeping in the dust? The suffering creatures of the earth are not unobserved by Him?”

“He sees, he numbers them all.”

“O Maria! say, if God be all-good and merciful, wherefore all the wretchedness, all the sufferings of men?”

“It is sufficient for thee to know that he will afford comfort to all, and will sometime cause all suffering to cease.”

“I cannot take hold on this comfort—I do not understand how happiness can ever outweigh pain. Happy angel—thou who wast already in childhood snatched away from the earth—thou hast never known its afflictions—thou understandest them not! Hear now one of its victims speak! Hear, and if thy incorporeal being can yet cherish human feelings—if this heart, familiar with the felicity of heaven, be not cold for foreign suffering—then shudder!” And from the depths of my agitated heart I exclaimed—“We suffer, we suffer! We call for help, and the earth opens her abysses, and heaven looks coldly

down and despises us. The night of despair covers us—the vulture sits on our heart, and rends from it piece after piece—and gnaws and gnaws. We call on death, but death comes not. We curse our life—we blaspheme——” I paused, thrilled through with horror!

Every thing was still for a moment, and I endeavoured, with a convulsive effort, to stupify my mind; for I dreaded to hear that scornful laughter, to see those dark abysses, to feel those pangs of agony.

“Listen!” said the angel-voice suddenly, strong and delicious as a harp-tone. “Listen to the song of victory from my lips, which the suffering children of earth will some time sing altogether in the bright heavens!” And I heard the angelic song, which sounded like a voice out of the clouds, and yet quite near to me.

O thou human anguish,  
Thy abode was brief!  
Heart, enfranchised captive,  
What a blessed relief,  
By suffering purified,  
Now to God allied!

To the bright blue heaven,  
From the vale of care,  
Let thine eye be given,  
Think not on despair!  
See above, in brightness,  
The dwelling of uprightness!

Though our life's track leads us  
Through a foreign land,

*Clough,  
in paper  
to the  
L. 1845*

'Tis but the course that speeds us  
To the bright world's strand,  
And afar off, we  
The Father's house can see.

There our hopes were tending,  
Amid storm and fear;  
Blessedness unending  
Now surrounds us here.  
The appointed goal is gained,  
The victory is obtained!

Never more in sadness  
Shall we look to heaven,  
Spring's eternal gladness  
To our hearts is given;  
And like the saints above,  
Henceforth our life is love!

Here no mist surroundeth,  
Error all is o'er;  
Word of doubt confoundeth  
Our weak faith no more,  
For truth so pure, so clear,  
Shineth only here!

The song ceased, but I fancied I still heard it. The pain also in my soul ceased. I felt how every bitter feeling within me dissolved itself by degrees, and gave place to gentle, consolatory ones. Sweet tears ran down my cheeks, and a feeling like that of the peace just now sung, overcame for a moment my being. Soon, however, the torment woke again, and doubt raised itself again from the depths of my soul. I folded my hands and prayed, "O pitying, gentle angel, forgive my weakness—leave me not—continue

to give my soul light! Tell me, what indeed is that for which we here struggle and suffer?"

"The right, the true life, of which this earthly life is only the shadow. An eternal mounting upwards, an eternal approach to God, the fountain of truth and bliss. That light, that peace, that sanctification and pure joy, which we here seek for in vain, we shall there find."

"Ah," I replied gloomily, "night encompasses me—I cannot take hold on the light."

"Behold, the red of the morning breaks," cried the voice; "behold, how it diffuses light around us; how every object, which just now were yet veiled in nocturnal shadow, appears in brightness, beauty, and truth. Thus also on the morning of eternity will its sun diffuse light over all the perplexities of life,—then wilt thou understand wherefore thou hast suffered; only continue good, only continue submissive—and all will be right. Son of suffering! thou also wilt one day drink from the cup of felicity!"

"And the poor tempted ones, they whom misfortune leads to crime, whom misfortune degrades—what fate may they expect?"

"God is merciful and just—adore him!"

"And the wicked,—they whom a horrible destiny seems even from their cradle to have destined to be the scourge of their fellow beings?"

The angel was silent a while, but at length said with a gentle, solemn seriousness, "Wherefore these

questions, this disquiet, child of dust? There is a God—worship God!”

It became brighter in my soul. “O,” said I softly, “I understand thee. God is God, and that says every thing,—my God also,” added I with deep and joyous feelings.

“And thy Father!” said the angelic voice.

“Yes—my Father,—and a Father who pardons! O Maria, tell me—if I, too weak to bear my burden, voluntarily laid down a life which I felt to be intolerable, would not this Father receive his unhappy child into his paternal bosom?”

“Do not mislead thyself,” replied the voice; “he who gives way before the trial, can never deserve the reward. O suffer with patience—hope with confidence! Deprive not thyself of the reward which awaits thee—of the well-pleasing of God, of the good pure witness of thine own conscience, of the blessings of those to whom thou canst be upon earth a support and a comfort.”

“But if I see that I am a burden to others as to myself, if——”

“Do right and worship God,” replied the voice, in a severe tone. I felt pain. At length I said, dejectedly, “Life is long, infinitely long, for the unhappy, who have on earth no other, better lot to expect; and the terminating goal of suffering appears to him too distant for it to operate as a constant alleviation of ever-returning pain. Thou, thou, in

the enjoyment of ever-ascending happiness, measurest not, remarkest not, the course of the years; thou canst not think what an infinitude of duration the days, the hours, nay, even the minutes, have for the unfortunate, who counts his pangs by the beating of his pulse! If thou, heavenly comforter, wert ever near me, I would not complain; but when thou returnest to the bright home from which thou out of mercy hast descended, what will become of me? How shall I be able to bear those long, long hours, which the united pains of the soul and the body make so insufferable?"

"I will not leave thee," replied the angel, whose voice was again infinitely soft and gentle; "I will assist thee to endure those hours, and to feel those pains less. God has strewn everywhere the seeds of consolation and joy; we will seek for them together. We will be submissive,—and all will become good; we will be submissive—and peace will descend into our hearts. We will worship God together,—together seek for the mitigation of thy pain; and if thou must weep, thou shalt no longer weep alone." At these words the voice of the angel became as it were stifled by emotion.

"Do the immortals also shed tears? thought I; and, amazed beyond all description, as well by the words as by the emotion that followed them, I raised myself up, and ventured for the first time to contemplate the white figure which sate at my side. Trembling

I sought for the dear, well-known features of Maria; I found them not. A lovely, to me, strange countenance, veiled with compassionate tears, and brightened by the dawning crimson of the morning, bent over me, and a warm, soft, rosy mouth impressed upon my brow an affectionate kiss.

“O my brother, my beloved brother!” whispered the same angelic voice which went so to my heart, “recognise thy sister, whom God has sent to thee to comfort and to love thee,—who will never more leave thee!” and she threw her arms around me.

My bewilderment was so great, for a moment, that I fancied I had lost the use of my mind.

My sister endeavoured, in the most heartfelt affectionate manner, to overcome the excitement of my mind. She locked me in her arms, let my head rest upon her breast, and with sweet loving words she hushed to rest as it were my agitated feelings. I became by degrees calmer, but for a long time could not persuade myself that it was only my imagination, excited in the highest degree, which had made me fancy that an angel—yet what do I say—was it not an angel, although in a human form?—had been sent by God for my consolation! Yes, that was she, in the most beautiful signification of the word, and I felt it every moment deeper. In order to give my mind the most perfect clearness, she told me in a few words the accident which had conducted her to me. Informed of my illness, of its

consequences, and the unhappy state of my mind, which my gay and fortunate brothers had described as bordering upon insanity, she had, immediately on her arrival at the paternal house, inquired after me, and learnt that I, more gloomy than common, had betaken myself into the park. As she, tolerably late at night, again inquired after me, and heard that I had not yet returned, this amiable sister, under the pretence of going to rest, stole away from the hall, and into the park, to seek out her afflicted brother. She was about to call my name, when my lamenting voice reached her ear, and guided her to the spot where I had sunk down overpowered by suffering, and almost insensible. She softly approached me, lingered quietly beside me, and heard how I called on the name of Maria, and besought her to comfort me; and her prudence and goodness suggested to her the thought of availing herself of this mistake, which my violently excited state of mind and my heated fancy had made, in order to afford me consolation in a manner which would make the greatest impression on my overstrained mind. Towards the conclusion of our conversation she thought that the human loving sister, deeply affected by my sufferings, would be more able to contribute to my comfort than one belonging to the world of spirits, and she let her feelings speak for me. “My brother”—thus she ended her explanation,—“be not displeased because I was thy angel! Maria



would, however, have left thee; and I will never, never more leave thee!"

I could not overcome my amazement. "And those oracular answers which thou gavest to me?"

"Thou wilt find their foundation in the Gospel—there is the fountain of comfort and of wisdom; we will together learn to gain them therefrom."

"And that charming consolatory hymn," I said, with tearful eye, "was it, then, only thy composition?"

"It was truth, which, although feebly composed, by me was put into the form in which thou now hast heard it. When we shall sometime hear, in a better world, the victorious songs of the suffering children of the earth, and shall even mingle our own voices in them,—how different, my brother!—how altogether another thing will these harmonies of eternity appear in comparison with feeble earthly tones! Ye heavenly felicities, which no human eye has seen, no ear has perceived, which no human understanding can comprehend,—how, indeed, could a mortal voice be worthy to sing ye! Ye patient sufferers, it will sometime be your lot to do so!"

"Yes," replied I, with emotion, "I may perhaps sometime unite my voice with these; but thou, sister, wilt sing yet more beautiful among the happy ones arisen from the grave,—happy on this and on the other side,—thou angel of God!" My sister made no reply, but looked up to heaven with a glance,

in which patient submission was so expressively depicted, as if she saw beforehand that severe fate would also strike her, and she offered up her own will as a sacrifice.

She took my arm within hers, and conducted me slowly back to the house. The ever-increasing daylight drove away the shadows from around; morning breezes played in the foliage, and the most delicious twittering of birds raised itself in the fresh odoriferous air. All this appeared to me an image of that which occurred in my own soul. In my night-enwrapped mind light had also arisen; I felt the gentle zephyrs of consolation, I heard the song of hope. Silently went on my sister and myself beside each other; but her beaming glance, which now was riveted upon me, now passed over the enchanting objects which surrounded us, and then raised itself to heaven, seemed to invite my feelings to follow in its holy flight.

The first beams of the sun gilded the windows of the Castle as we approached it—the same windows whose glittering illumination some hours before had made so painful an impression upon me. Now I contemplated them with quite different feelings; and as I turned to the beaming torch of day, I repeated softly, with deep and delightful emotion, Thomson's glorious prayer:

“ Father of light and life! thou Good Supreme!  
O teach me what is good! teach me thyself!  
Save me from folly, vanity, and vice,

From every low pursuit ! and feed my soul  
With knowledge, conscious peace, and virtue pure ;  
Sacred, substantial, never-fading bliss ! ”

I perceived the change within myself with rapture. The nocturnal scene had made a deep impression upon me ; and however natural every thing which had occurred might be, I still could not help ascribing it to a supernatural guidance. In the moment of pain and of despair I had called upon an angel, and an angel had descended to me with kind, long-wished-for words of consolation and hope. The voice of my glorified Maria could scarcely have produced a greater change in me than the voice of my gentle sister did.

She was one of those beings who only seem to linger upon the earth to alleviate its misery, and in whose pure soul heaven has stamped, as it were, its image. Gentle, lovely, wise, serious—she went through the world like a loftier spirit, who only takes part in life that it may sweeten the lives of others. She found her happiness only in the happiness of others ; and if she now felt the sufferings of others bitterly, it was because she kept her gaze too firmly fixed upon the terminal goal of the journey through life for her to permit the brightness of her mind to be gloomed by the difficulties of the way. And precisely this repose in her own soul enabled her, wisely and considerately, to select and apply the right method for the alleviation of every sorrow.

I soon perceived the beneficial influence of her gentle and prudent guidance. She did not permit the temporary flight which had elevated my soul to sink back into cowardice, but maintained it upright, and sought to bring it round to tranquil, deliberate, and independent strength.

She soon discovered that ambition was my chief passion, and that the loss of all that could promise success to this passion was the principal cause of my deep melancholy. She judged wisely, that this passion, like all strong passions of the soul, could scarcely be speedily brought into subjection; and endeavoured only to give it another direction, to set to it a better, nobler, less selfish, and to me a yet attainable object.

“Thou canst not,” said she once, in our confidential conversations, “become a Scipio, a Camillus, a Leonidas; but thou mayst be a Socrates, a Plato, or, which is still better, one of those Apostles of Christianity, whose sacred and heroic virtues have deserved immortality on earth. Believe me, my brother, the world needs for its happiness more wise men than heroes; and the happy, noble man, who has given to humanity one comfort, one refreshment, may die with a more beautiful consciousness than that which sweetened the last hours of an Epaminondas. Thou hast received from nature remarkable gifts of mind, memory, acuteness; exercise and cultivate these. Thou hast knowledge—strive to acquire more and better grounded knowledge. The field of mental

cultivation is immeasurable, and the flowers which it bears are noble everlastings. The richer thy harvest becomes, the more (to continue the simile) thou garnerest of that which is mature and solid, all the more wilt thou be able to extend of the fruit of thy labour to the greatly-needing hungry many, and wilt deserve the blessings of the present and future generations. Let us never forget, that what we undertake and accomplish, if it be actually good and beneficial, must be for the use of the kingdom of God."

Thus spoke my good sister, less, as I believe, in the conviction of my ability to reach the prototypes which she presented to me, than to animate and inspire my sunken spirit.

In proportion as my earthly fortune opened itself again to me, my courage and my powers reawoke. The horizon extended itself, as it were, before my gaze. Full of hope, I extended my arms towards the ascending sun, in which I now saw, as formerly, the image of light which would beam upon my earthly life.

I began to labour for my new object with all the zeal which my weak health allowed, and might perhaps have exerted myself beyond my powers, if my gentle and prudent sister had not here also stood by my side, watchfully and warningly.

She induced me to seek for diversion of mind, and by agreeable light occupations or pastimes to cheer my spirits and to strengthen my powers. I had talent for drawing. She encouraged me to practise

this beautiful, serious art, which enables us to perpetuate beloved memories, and at the same time to forget the oppressive hours of the present. How often, when I endeavoured to preserve her gentle features on paper, have I forgotten myself; the whole world, time, and every thing which could be important and fatiguing, whilst my whole soul lived with delight in my beloved work. How often, whilst I have been representing the attractive and fresh objects of the country, the leafy trees, the calm lake, the bold heights, the shady valleys, the grazing herds, the clean turf-covered cottages, and the heavens veiled with transparent clouds, how often has the feeling of peace and quiet satisfaction penetrated my soul!

The great condition for that pure enjoyment is this, that the heart is free from every root of bitterness, every sentiment of ill-temper and envy; and in a short time, these disturbers of peace were entirely driven out of mine.

I had formerly read history with the same mind with which children see a magnificent spectacle, with admiration for the splendid and the great, without in any way as a whole connecting and embracing it. I read it again, after years, and still more, misfortune, had matured and formed my understanding, and found a totally different impression from this reading.

In contemplating the fate of the world, my own vanished from before my eyes. When my thoughts roamed through centuries, my lifetime seemed to

lose itself in these, like a drop in the ocean,—and when the misfortunes of millions lay open before my sight, I was ashamed of thinking on my own. I learned, in one word, to forget myself. And when my weak vision could perceive in these pictures of history only a confused swarming mass, when I lost there the traces of a wise and good Providence, when I saw upon earth only a disorderly succession of errors, confusion and misery, then my sister turned my glance to heaven.

I looked up to heaven, listened to the voices of the good and holy upon earth, who—in combat, in pain, in death—have been raised with confidence, joy, and celestial power, to announce to us a higher aim than earthly happiness, another home, a higher light;—listened to the promises of immortality, and to the presentiments of it in my own breast, and learned to embrace in my heart the consolatory belief which already here in life diffused brightness over the darkest night.

I looked up to heaven. Light came from above. It beamed down into my soul. I comprehended that here below all things are only in the beginning, and full of hope; I cheerfully seized again my pilgrim-staff, composed as regarded my fate, and certain of my object. From this time my heart had continually peace; and it was not difficult for me to seek out many materials for happiness and joy, wherewith I was enabled to build upon earth the cottage of my

content. Among these, I have mentioned pleasant and diverting occupations, and I must yet add—society,—not that on a great scale, to which I was still always opposed, and which, on account of my exterior, could only awaken unpleasant feelings, but that composed of my own family and my own friends, who did not alone endure me, but who endeavoured with kindness that I should, by degrees, find pleasure in their joy, and even learn to contribute to it,—truly often enough, like a blind musician contributing to the pleasures of the dance.

My sister and myself took all possible pains to make my temper, violent by nature, mild and cheerful. She, by warnings, friendly counsels, but principally by her tenderness, her care to surround me with little pleasures, which nobody knew better how to arrange and to make piquant than she did; I, by watchfulness over myself, by repressing all irritability and sensitiveness, and for the rest, by perfect submission to her guidance.

“Whoever,” said she, “is deprived of outward charms, and perpetually requires the attention and cherishing care of others, must labour still more than others to acquire that mild, kind, amiable temper and behaviour, which is alone sufficient to win the devotion of others,—and which make all little attentions which are shewn to them become so agreeable, all greater ones so light.”

I followed her counsel. I endeavoured to be



amiable,—I became beloved, and I deeply felt the happiness of being so.

The first great pain which befel me after my return to life and joy, was occasioned to me by her, who had formerly so affectionately consoled me. Ah! my angelically good sister was doomed, as she herself had divined, to experience herself on earth the bitterness of grief. He—who was worthy of her in every respect, and with whom she led an angel's life—died suddenly, and her tender, only child followed him soon afterwards. As tranquilly and mildly as she had formerly said to me—"Let us be submissive," she now repeated to herself these words,—and was perfectly resigned. Kind and considerate for others as formerly, her bright peaceful eye was ever attentive to the wishes and necessities of others; but they remarked that something in her was changed—her joy was gone—she was in heaven. Her life on earth was now only a slow descent; not that of an extinguished flame, but of a descending sun, which, whilst with bright, although dying beams, he lets his farewell illumine this world, stands about to be reilluminated with new-born strength and purity in another.

She was no more!—and alone—and deserted by her—I feared for a long time to lose myself,—but I soon felt that she and her consolations continued still in my heart my guardian angels. I collected my powers, and remained resigned to the will of heaven.

From the Eternal home, where she lives blessed and again united to her own, she casts sometimes,

perhaps, a glance upon the grateful brother whose good angel she was on earth. O that this glance might never find me unworthy! — that this glance might not look down without pleasure into a purified and sanctified heart. My life has not come up to the splendid image which we beforehand conceived, I have become no Socrates nor Plato, but still am wise enough not to weep over it. We had—I in particular—had had quite too much confidence in the powers of my mind and my understanding. I soon observed that my ability to comprehend on a great scale, and to think, was very much confined. Something—I know not what it was—it seemed to me as if it were my own skull—presented to my thoughts, when they had arrived at a certain point, a wall which was to them as insurmountable as the walls of my room were to my feet; and my spirit was, alas! so constituted, that its flight rather led me into than out of the clouds. Thus I was also here obliged to give up my ambitious hopes, and found myself, when I, at length, had accustomed myself to fruitless combats and endeavours, only the better for it.

My sister had above all things turned my mind to religion; and this, which overcomes all human passions, poured her tranquillizing balsam also over the waves of my ambition and worldly vanity. And, in truth, if we acknowledge ourselves as work-tools in the hand of Providence, who has created us, how foolish it is then to wish to be anything different to that for which He has destined us!

When therefore I saw my inability to raise myself above mediocrity in the path of knowledge and of science—I ceased to strive after it, and calmly renounced a renown which was not destined for me. I employed therefore all the greater pains to enable that portion of myself, the perfection of which is impeded by no wall, by no, “so far and no farther,” but to which, on the contrary, infinitude stands open. Every one who has earnestly begun this work will find that he creates his own happiness.

In the sphere which my inward eye can command, I endeavour so perfectly to comprehend all, so to profit by it and to employ it, that it actually may be advantageous to others and to myself. I am, according to my ability, active in outward life,—and never do I alleviate a torment of the body or of the soul of a fellow-being without experiencing an increase in my happiness. When the infirmity of my body compels me to inactivity—I am quiet, and occupy my thoughts more exclusively with the beautiful future which religion has opened to us on the other side of the land of care. By my patience under suffering, and my, if not always merry, yet always friendly state of mind, I endeavour not to make unpleasant the attentions and care which people shew to me, and in particular, make my brothers and sisters aware how easily a temper, cheerful and resigned through God, can bear outward adversity. They are kind and amiable, and—I know it, and say it with tears of joy—there is no one amongst them who would not

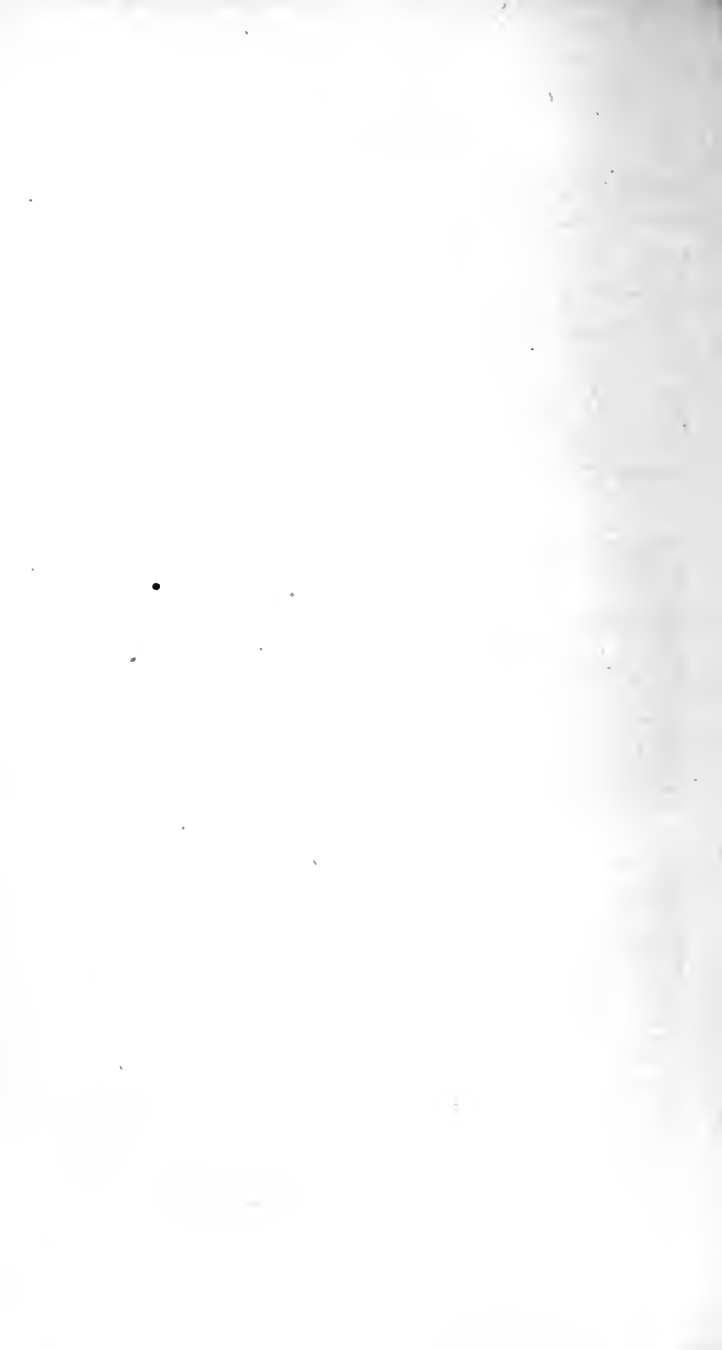
willingly give up some of the days of his life to beautify mine. And yet I can give nothing more to them, than—my sincere friendship,—do little more for them, than many a time to think for them,—and always to feel with them. My sick-room is now their confessional, now their council-room, and often also their temple of joy;—and when they are happy, they will just as willingly gladden me with the view of their happiness, as I will gladly see it, and take part in it.

The love of my parents is again given to me since I no longer embitter their days by impatient murmuring over my fate. Ah, have I now, indeed, reason to complain of my fate. The heaven of my future stands brightly open there, and my present life is agreeable. I love still more virtuous and amiable people, sympathise in their fate, and am loved by them in return. I can do some good—my heart has peace,—but all that I now am, all that I now say, that have I from thee, my good sister. Thou awokest me from the depths of despair, didst press me to thy loving breast—gave my soul comfort, my life courage,—my powers a new object—my temper gentleness! When I cried to heaven to send to me an angel, how mercifully was I heard! Thou didst come, my sister! O delightful comforter, gentle instructor!—although vanished from my sight, thou livest eternally in my heart; and every blessing, which I have from thee, I bring again to thee in humble gratitude!

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A LETTER ABOUT SUPPERS..

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## A LETTER ABOUT SUPPERS.

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*Stockholm, November 20th, 1828.*

BEST AMALIA!

Thou inquirest what I do in the great city of Stockholm, whilst the Parliament waves its strife-proclaiming banners, and whilst the wise and the unwise heads of the capital knock one against the other, and all the uninitiated expect to see the public good start forth from the mighty blow in a new-created Minerva-shape. Thou askest what I do during all this?—Ah, my love—I eat suppers, and yawn! The day before yesterday I was at a supper; yesterday, I was at a supper; to-night also shall be at a supper, and if I am still alive to-morrow, I shall, alas, also to-morrow eat a supper. “A supper!” I hear thee ask—“is there then anything so horrible in it?”

My Amalia, thou happy daughter of the country, remain with thy sewing and thy flowers,—let the pure air kiss thy cheeks, sing thy simple songs, close thy day in peace and joy, eat thy frugal evening meal, go to bed at nine o’clock, thank God, and pray to

Him that He may preserve thee from city life and suppers!

But if thou wilt become acquainted at a distance with these pleasures of the great and elegant world, then accompany me in spirit for a few minutes, and thou shalt be initiated into the mysteries of suppers.

We must adorn ourselves with flowers! Having been invited eight days ago to take part at the festival of pleasure, we must, in order to salute it, call up our freshest smiles!

The clock strikes eight. We leave the glass with a parting glance to ascend into the earriage which is standing ready, which rattling will convey us through the streets of the city to where the beaming blaze of light beckons to us from a long row of windows.

Not a word about disarranged curls, rumpled dresses, and the thousand other little travelling discomforts. One must forget something. One gets all ones array again into the speediest order, and reassumes that becoming smile which one had left upon the steps.

The doors of the saloon are opened, and we float in. Is it the simoom or the sirocco which is wafted towards us from the throng of people and lights? One of the two it certainly is, and thou feelest already a universal drowsiness and disabling diffuse themselves over thy intellectual powers.

The greetings are over, we seat ourselves. God be thanked for good rest! If no earthquake happen,



we shall not soon rise again. Closely seated together, the ladies mutually review each other,—pay compliments, and say polite things to each other—drawing up their mouths the while as if they were sucking in Sugarland. The eyes twinkle, the heads are in motion, the feathers sway here and there, the silken dresses rustle; there is a greeting, a questioning and an answering; there is a murmuring and a bustling, becoming by degrees ever fainter and fainter, like a dying-away storm. The murmur ceases—it begins again—it dies out—and all becomes still.

They get the card-tables ready, carry tea about, exhibit engravings. People play and are silent—people blow and drink—people examine and yawn.

It is hot and sultry. Slowly creeps on the time. The heat of the rooms increases, curls become straight, certain noses become red, the ears burn, the eyes fill with tears;—one gets uneasy, one turns oneself hither and thither, one puffs and plagues oneself.

People try to begin a conversation. Bubbling ideas might enliven ones languishing feelings like fresh springs of water; but ah! ideas have gone out of our heads like the pomatum out of the hair, and we find ourselves hardly witty and clever enough to talk rationally about the weather. And if thou do exert thyself sufficiently to say something particular, thou wilt receive for thy answer a polite “Yes,” or “No,” or “Hum,” or “Indeed!” which will as

much as say, "My good one, do not give yourself any trouble!"

See, there now approaches thee a gentleman with his hat in his hand, in order to make some diversion in the entertainment. What does he say to thee? Thou smilest really so gently. Was it something civil? 'No.' Something witty? 'No.' Something stupid? 'No.' Well, was it something, then? 'Yes, but something which was absolutely nothing. The poor fellow, he was rather sleepy, had lost at the card-table; and was, moreover, under the influence of the supper-sirocco. What then, indeed, could he say other than—it is terribly warm here!'

In order to awaken thy own sense, which is slumberous against thy will, thou lookest about in the numerous company to find some amusement in the remarks which thou canst make. In vain! every thing is so uniform. Good ton and refined education have so polished and trimmed, have so far removed all marked form, all originality, that one is aware of no other difference in these individuals than the trifles which shew themselves in dress, and those which merciful nature, that enemy of melancholy uniformity, always knows how to preserve between nose, mouth, eyes, etc.,—but this is all.

They carry about ices and confectionery. Some refreshment is perceptible in the room and the senses. People stick their teaspoons into their mouths, and enjoy, and are silent.

In the side-rooms one perceives the noise of the trumps which are struck by the players on the table. The company in the saloon sets itself now in motion—people turn themselves round—people rise up—they set down the little plates—they draw breath.

The piano is opened. Good. The magic tones of music will probably put to flight the demons of ennui. They thrust in a half-timid, half-bold lover of music, that he may play. He asserts that he cannot, but still seats himself at the instrument. He reddens, he turns pale, he trembles, but strikes forcibly upon the patient keys, and accords them to a song. Now, thank God that it is ended, and has not gone off worse.

Real talent after this makes itself heard, unpretending but calm in the consciousness of its power. They are songs from Frithiof which are sung. Music, poetry, both are beautiful. The voice of the singer is certain and agreeable, although the heat and the crowd of people in the little room take away from its tone. The last accord has sounded,—why this silence in the company, this immoveableness,—is it delight, rapture, inspiration? Repressed yawns and sleepy eyes make answer. The singer has sung to the walls. The supper-sirocco had disabled all feeling.

Dimmer and dimmer burn the lights, the heat becomes more oppressive, the air more sultry. People feel that they are just about to sink into dull unconsciousness; people compel themselves to be merry;

they talk about fashions, dinners, members of parliament, and so on; one tries to squeeze it out of oneself; one overdoes it; one tells lies; one speaks slander, compelled by necessity, and in anxiety to say something however—and wishes oneself afar off.

But slowly wear away the hours, the minutes stretch and expand themselves in the same way. One feels the need of doing so oneself.

Yet once more one contemplates the engravings, but takes them in one's hand upside down. One still talks, but says yes instead of no, and no instead of yes; one suppresses yawns at the risk of being choked; one feels oneself weariful, other people intolerable; but one still keeps on simpering and smiling kindly.

From eight to nine—from nine to ten—from ten to eleven—from eleven to twelve, have we sat quietly and patiently in this little hell of heat and courtesy.

Our strength is at an end, midnight has struck, and now certainly people would either fall into a fainting fit or die; but the doors of the eating-room are opened, odours of eatables operate like eau de Cologne upon our nerves,—a voice proclaims, “it is served”—and people are saved!

The company rise hastily, and in a mass. They go out in couples, or one after the other, into the eating-hall, where an immeasurable table, a new land of Canaan, offers all dainty gifts of plenty and of luxury to the fainting wanderers coming out of the wilderness.

People troop about the table; people throng together; each chooses a place for himself; this one will not sit by that; that one will not sit by this. At last they are seated.

Now goes on the eating with the greatest and most earnest zeal. People eat and eat and eat. People feel a desperate desire by anything of activity to indemnify themselves for the long inactivity and tedium to which they have been subjected, and they seize upon the only one which offers itself. One eats till one is satisfied, more than satisfied; but one still eats on with unalterable zeal. At length the dessert is brought in. The mammas, satisfied themselves, cleverly empty the plates into their reticules and pocket-handkerchiefs—probably for the children who are left at home,—whilst the daughters read with great interest the devices upon the sugar work, which upon its summit contains unexampled stupidity, and exercise their wit in guessing charades.

The meal time, thank God, has an end like every thing else. The money of the host changed into veal-cutlets, tarts, and wine, rests in our stomachs. With this burden we withdraw again into the saloon, stand there yet a while *pour l'honneur*, and talk of nothing; take leave at length, and wearied body and soul drive home, that we may lie down in bed at one or half-past, with overladen stomachs, with empty heads and hearts, which have preserved from the lately passed hours no other remembrances than such as have for

their consequences on the following day, weariness and indisposition.

In the mean time the host and hostess of the supper go about amid extinguished lights, and congratulate one another that the history is come to an end, and comfort themselves for the expense of the supper by its having been splendid, and that people have had a deal of pleasure with them. Deceived, short-sighted mortals!—wait—soon will your grateful guests thank you with new suppers, and the bill for ennui, which you now owe them, will be perfectly balanced.

There hast thou, my Amalia, a sketch of a great city supper, and, with few exceptions, the suppers of the capital. They are a mass of sleepy sisters, whose mother, called Laziness, and whose foster-mother, Custom, continue to conduct them about with low curtseys from house to house. People have called them a thousand unbearable names, but people still delay to proscribe them, because Laziness and Custom are stiff ladies who have known how to gain respect, and against whom people cannot offend unpunished.

If people ridicule their hoop petticoats, they run the risk of being called foolish and self-willed.

If thou fancy that a touch of November spleen have thrown a dark shadow over this supper-description, I will not exactly say no to it; but in the principal features it is true, and not caricatured.

It is incomprehensible to me how so many clever

people can come together in order to fatigue themselves so.

If the genius of Pleasure were to publish a proclamation to its worshippers, with the invitation to enjoy themselves, I fancy to myself that its contents would probably be as follow:—

“ Friends of pleasure, of cheerfulness and joy, old and young,—ye who would enjoy life, its short hours of rest, its fleeting minutes,—fly, fly suppers!

“ If ye would, during the long winter evenings, drive away the spirits of ennui, then listen to my recipe:

“ Assemble connexions, acquaintance, and friends, but not too many. The supper-sirocco arises from the crush and heat.

“ Be ye only a few; be however cheerful! Kindle the lights in your rooms, but still more the lights of understanding and of refined jest in your heads. Let the easy fire of joy be lighted for each other. Yet, once more, be cheerful, be kind, and, if you can, be witty! Dance, play, sing,—but do it all so that it may give you pleasure! Let nothing begin heavily, nothing end heavily! Entwine with light hands the garland of innocent joy; and for that purpose extend to every one, unpretendingly, his little flower!

“ Is the pleasure of conversation dear to you, let the fire of ideas circulate among you; throw one to another the sparks of jest, which shine, but do not burn. Let thought reply to thought, feeling to feel-

ing, smile to smile, like melodious echoes, or rather like those gentle and charming tones which the lightest touch calls forth from the attuned harp.

“The well-cared-for mind must not, however, forget the physical—the soul must not forget the body. Give to this a refreshment; but let this also be light, be given without formality, be as it were a pleasure. If people sit down to table with serious, important faces, with knife and fork and napkin, to eat—then it is a labour.

“‘People eat to live; people do not live to eat,’ says a wise man. Would you give yourselves pleasure, then eat and drink only to be able afterwards to laugh the more cordially.”

When the all-wise Creator commanded that day and night should for twelve hours govern alternately our little globe, it certainly was by this his intention that man, his noble but weak child, should repose in the lap of the night, that he might be able to work and to enjoy himself amid the light of day. Therefore, let the end of the evening be the end of your day and your pleasures. Let midnight find you quiet, and taking your rest; and closing the day in peace at the right time, sing with the noble and amiable poet Franzén—

After an evening  
By calm joy attended,  
And cordially ended,  
Sleep we so calmly, and waken well pleased.



O heaven! the clock strikes eight—the horrible supper-hour! The carriage is already drawn up, my husband stands ready, and I have not one single flower in my hair. Good-night, happy Amalia, thou wilt soon go to bed, and I must yet arm myself for a campaign. To-morrow, if I am in a condition, I will sing—

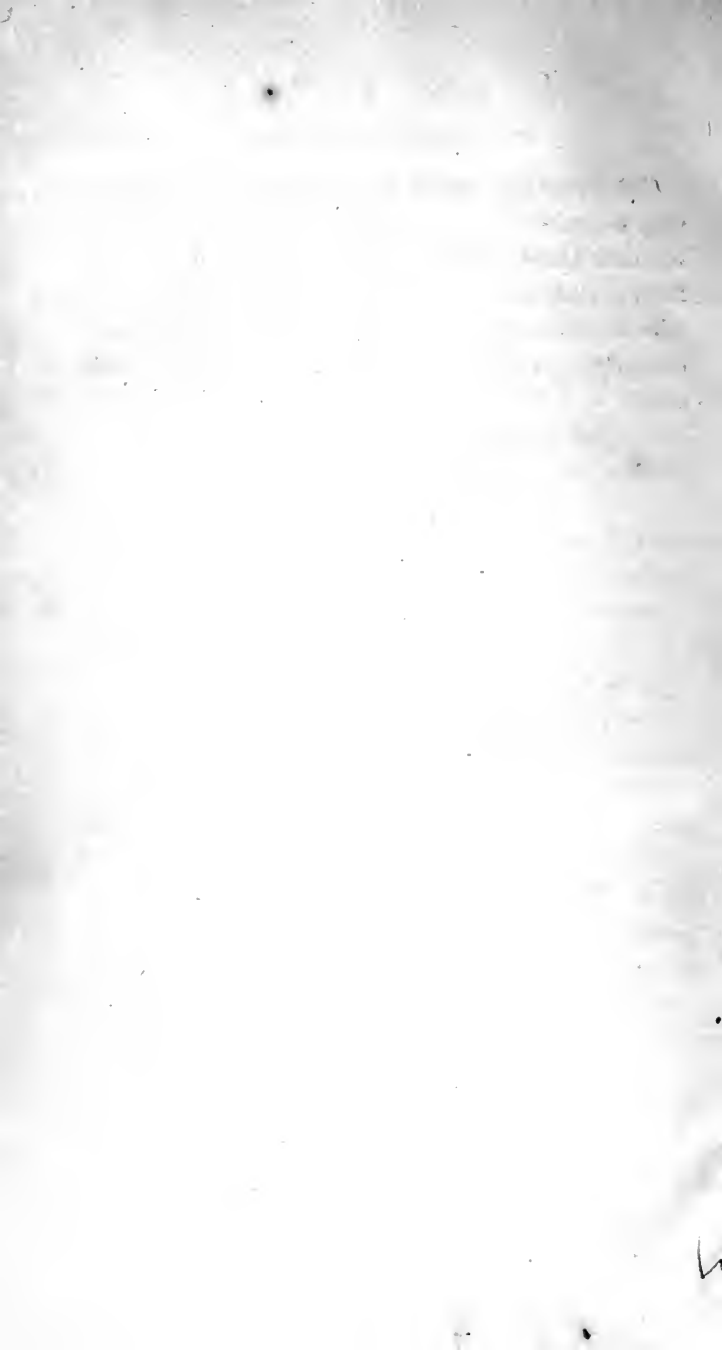
After an evening  
In eating expended,  
Yawningly ended,  
Sleep we so badly, and wake out of sorts.

THE END.

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